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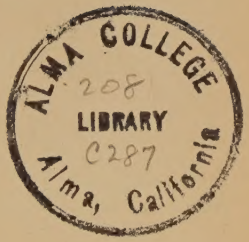

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ST. CHARLES BORROMEO

(1538–1584)

BY M. G. B. MALINS

No period in the history of the Church furnishes more striking proof of her indestructibility than the sixteenth century. If ever the gates of hell could have prevailed, they would surely have done so then. Taking a glance over Europe, we find every country passing through some crisis, none wholly free from the destructive scourge of the devil's work. In Germany, the fatherland of Luther, heresy had severed great part of the country from the faith and worked its ravages more efficaciously than elsewhere; Switzerland was the headquarters of Calvin and his adherents; while France resisted the Calvinist encroachments in a half-hearted manner according as the political party, either Guise or Condé, held sway. England, once "the Isle of Saints," was openly apostate, and Queen Elizabeth was endeavouring to ally herself with the Protestant princes of Germany, and to strengthen her position by aiding the Huguenot party in France. Spain alone preserved the faith entire, though even there King Philip II. was antagonistic to the Vatican, and wished to place the authority of the State above that of the Church. Everywhere political wars and intrigues were going on, error had broken the bonds by which rulers and people are united, and there was nothing to replace them. Party strove with party for pre-eminence, and the result was lamentable. Such was the outward aspect of Europe, but her interior life was darker still. Spiritual death everywhere prevailed. The Church in every branch, high and low, was corrupt; avarice and vice reigned supreme; a carelessness and indifference to the things of God had made an opening

for the germ of heresy to spread with devouring rapidity; while discipline of any kind was unknown. Abuses were everywhere rife, and the ignorance of the clergy, and in many cases their scandalous lives, rendered their sacred office hateful in the eyes of the people. In Italy itself, the home of apostles and martyrs, a sensuality only equal to that of pagan times was everywhere predominant, and the priests were still under the degenerating influence of the so-called Renaissance. Such being the condition of those in authority, it is not difficult to imagine the neglected state of the people.

But "the deeper the darkness, the brighter the morn," and from out that darkness of sin and misery there shone forth in many a land some of the brightest lights that have illumined the Church. Among these is St. Charles Borromeo, who was raised up by God to be essentially a "Reformer." To the faithful few the need of reform was ever present and keenly longed for, and to it St. Charles gave his life, and has left his mark, both by his influence at the Council of Trent and by the wonders he wrought in his diocese of Milan. His fervour and zeal never relaxed and were always turned towards the same object. It was no new work or organization that absorbed his energies, but his task was none the less difficult. A new era was beginning in the life of the Church, and her discipline needed to be adjusted to the altered times. The people must be called back to the "old paths" by a fresh and emphatic declaration of dogma, and the clergy incited to a higher life by the example of holy Bishops living in their midst. Such was St. Charles Borromeo—a model of sanctity, a defender of the liberties of the Church, a shepherd whose sole care was his flock, a priest burning with the love of souls, a saint who endeared himself to the poor and afflicted by his self-sacrifice and devotion to their needs. He carried his flock through many dangers, over the rocks of heresy on which many had stumbled, through the thorns of discord which had torn many from the fold, through the torrents of vice which threatened to wash all traces of Christianity from their lives, till he laid

them in a place of pasture, watered by the care of the good priests he trained, until worn out with toil he laid down his charge and gave up his soul to his Master with the words "*Ecce venio*," "Behold I come!"

Charles Borromeo was born in October, 1538, at Arona, a small town on the shores of Lake Maggiore. Sprung from one of the oldest families in Italy, his ancestors had been eminent both in Church and State, as well as in the army and among men of letters. His father, Count Gilbert Borromeo, combined great piety with rare diplomatic ability, his private life being marked by a sanctity unique amid the depravity of the times; and from him our saint learnt his love of prayer and tender solicitude for the poor. The mother of St. Charles, Margaret de Medici, sister of the Cardinal de Medici, afterwards Pope Pius IV., was a worthy wife of the Count, both by nobility of family and the practice of virtue.

The early years of Charles were marked by an unusual gravity and love of seclusion. He took no interest in boyish pastimes, but found his recreation in building altars to Our Lady and singing psalms. His father, convinced of the boy's vocation, allowed him, as was the custom in those days, at an early age to receive the tonsure and to wear the cassock. The attraction of Charles to the ecclesiastcal state daily increased, and he set his mind to live up to the holiness of that calling. When he was twelve years old, an uncle resigned in his favour a rich abbey not far from his home; yet, despite his youth, Charles recognized its revenues to be the patrimony of Christ, and resolved they should be spent in the service of the poor. The Count rejoiced to see his son thus generously respond to the call of God, and determined he should receive a fitting education, and accordingly sent him to Milan.

Charles had already shown great love of study. "You do not know this young man," said one of his masters; "he will one day be the reformer of the Church and will do wonderful things." It was while he was studying at Milan that the death of his mother occurred, an event

that increased the already serious bend of his mind, and at this time particularly his letters are marked by a tender devotion to his family. From Milan, he went in his fifteenth year to complete his studies at the university of Pavia, which then held a high reputation for learning. With his life at Pavia many troubles enter into the life of our Saint, all of which he met with wonderful resignation and a strength of character far beyond his years. As a Saint is, however, made and not born, we cannot fail to note that he was keenly sensible to the many annoyances to which he was subjected. Being of a noble house, he was obliged to retain a certain retinue which proved a constant source of trouble to him, and when, as often happened, he was without money and in sore straits owing to the ill conduct of his household, his innate pride and strong emotion would plainly show themselves.

At the age of twenty-two he took his doctor's degree. During these years of study his father died, and, though only a younger son, the charge of the family fell to him, and in this task he found a field for the exercise of the prudence he afterwards showed in dealing with the affairs of the Church.

The death of Pope Paul IV. and the election of Cardinal de Medici in the year 1559 was the dawn of a glorious future for the two young nephews of the new Pontiff Pius IV. Count Frederick, the brother of St. Charles, hastened at once to Rome, where much honour awaited him, but nothing could disturb the habitual serenity of Charles. On hearing the news of his uncle's election, he strengthened his soul with the Sacraments and urged his brother to do the same. He was not, however, to remain long in obscurity. The new Pope recognized and appreciated his extraordinary talents and sanctity, and wished to employ him in the service of the Church. Charles was at once created a Cardinal-Deacon, and entrusted with many high offices at the Vatican, besides being made Administrator of the See of Milan. These offices he accepted only from a spirit of obedience and as a means of beginning the reform already

dear to his heart. His rare intellectual qualities soon determined the Pope to make him his Secretary of State. The customs of the times demanded that one holding offices of such dignity in the Church should live in a manner conformable to them, and St. Charles thought he would serve God more efficaciously if he did not cut himself off too ostentatiously from these customs. But despite the apparent grandeur of his household, he himself led a frugal life, preserving always a spotless integrity and purity of heart. In his anxiety to banish idleness from the Papal Court, he instituted what were known as "Vatican Nights." These were meetings of clergy and laity for the cultivation of the fine arts, the practice of oratory, and the reading of holy books. The real object of St. Charles, however, was to inspire in those who attended a horror of vice and a love of virtue; he hoped, too, to revive the ancient custom of Bishops preaching, by inducing them to speak on these occasions. The death of his brother, Count Frederick, in the year 1562, filled his mind more than ever with a sense of the hollowness of earthly glory, and made him determine to adopt a stricter rule of life. A Jesuit Father, whom he chose for his confessor, was his constant companion, and helped him largely by the spiritual exercises.

Being the last surviving member of his family, he was urged to marry, but at once put an end to any such idea by being hurriedly ordained in Rome, and asked forgiveness for his haste from the Pope, saying, "I am now wedded to the Spouse I have so long desired." He was made Cardinal-Priest by the title of Santa Prassede and soon consecrated Bishop. During all this time he had not forgotten Milan, but had sent some Jesuit Fathers to give missions, and employed the revenues received by the death of his brother, in the foundation of a college for the training of youths at Pavia. It was his ardent desire to return to Milan and devote himself to the care of his diocese. Afraid, however, of guiding himself in such a matter, he asked advice of Don Bartholomew of the Martyrs, an eminent and pious Dominican, who said he could not

leave the aged Pontiff to carry his heavy burden alone; and though even the monastic life had strong attractions for him, and he yearned "to live as if there were only God and himself in the world," this longing was not to be realized, for the same priest pointed out to him the special work for which God had placed him in his exalted position. He was, as Don Bartholomew saw, the soul which should give life to the Pope's endeavour to establish peace in the Church by means of a solid reform. Though heresy had severed many from the fold, it was not too late to take strong precautions to prevent further losses, and it was St. Charles who encouraged the Pontiff to carry on the work of his predecessors by the renewal of the Council of Trent, in which lay the sole remedy for an evil so universal—an idea that met with the support and warm approval of the Cardinals assembled in Consistory.

The Council had been first convoked by Pope Paul III. in 1536, but, owing to many interruptions, had never produced any definite results. The difficulties in the way of its renewal are easily understood by considering the confused state of Europe. Germany objected to its being held at Trent, and wished its seat to be either Cologne or Ratisbon, with the Pope presiding in person; England would hear nothing of it at all, Elizabeth refusing even to receive the Papal Nuncio; France held tenaciously to the idea of a National Council; while no support could be expected from Switzerland, then a chaos of petty princes and political quarrels. Such obstacles would have seemed to any ordinary intellect insuperable, but the Cardinal by his admirable tact succeeded in pacifying the European Powers and made them realize that in the renewal of the Council lay the sole means of securing their thrones. Thus he contrived to assemble and bring to a successful termination this the greatest of all the Œcumenical Councils. The nature of the questions it was called upon to discuss, comprising as they did all Catholic doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline, together with the grandeur of its results, render it unique.

The Holy Father, to implore the blessing of Heaven upon it, proclaimed a Jubilee, and ordered public prayers to be said in every church in Rome, while he himself with his Cardinals went barefooted in procession from church to church. But even after the Council had been convoked, fresh difficulties arose and renewed demands for delay were made, the most urgent of which came from France. The Queen Regent, Catherine of Medici, could with difficulty be brought to realize the necessity of a firm resistance to heresy, for, dominated by a love of power, the thought of extending her authority alone filled her mind, and it needed all the astuteness and keen intellect of St. Charles to combat this sovereign and the crafty guiles of her insinuating courtiers. The young Secretary of State interpreted to her the wishes and desires of the Pope, and but for his patience and skill in dealing with the obstacles she put in the way of the Council, France would certainly have lost the Faith at this time. To remedy the ills and strengthen the chains of discipline which the times and the degenerate character of priests and people had made loose, it was necessary to adopt rigid measures in regard to both dogma and discipline, for only thus could a widespread, thorough, and lasting reform be effected. The entire correspondence connected with this immense work was personally conducted by the Cardinal, and rest was almost unknown to him during the sittings of the Council, or indeed afterwards when its decrees had to be enforced. It was his mind that ruled, his intellect that advised, his prudence that calmed, his energy that stimulated, and his perseverance that gave success to the Council of Trent.

As already stated, the work of reform at Milan had begun during the residence of St. Charles in Rome. The Jesuits he had sent, assisted in teaching at the seminary for the education of priests, and also in the education of children—a work very close to the heart of St. Charles. He also effected several minor reforms in the monasteries and convents of the city, but the difficulties of bringing anything to a successful issue while

absent from home, were great and seemed to increase. Pius IV., moved at last by the entreaties of his nephew, allowed him to go to Milan to assemble his suffragan bishops in a first Provincial Council. The entry of their Archbishop into Milan was an occasion of great rejoicing to the people, who erected triumphal arches and hung the streets with rich draperies. The Provincial Council was opened by a procession of bishops to the cathedral, which in itself was edifying to the people, who had not seen any ceremony performed with decency and reverence for years, much less with dignity and splendour. The Archbishop sang Mass and preached in a manner which moved all present, from the words, "With desire have I desired to eat this Pasch with you." This Council served as a model for all succeeding ones, and lasted through many sessions. St. Charles besought his suffragans to assist him in enforcing the decrees of the Council of Trent, and to give themselves wholly to the duties of their sacred calling. He implored all present in eloquent words ever to bear in mind and copy the example of the Apostles; like them to be filled with an ardent desire for the salvation of souls, to be simple, humble, and modest, and by their assiduity in prayer to obtain the necessary grace from God to lead back their flocks to the Supreme Pastor who gave His life for His sheep.

This Council drew up minute regulations for bishops and clergy, and proved the first stone laid by the Archbishop in the new spiritual life he desired to form in his beloved city. These regulations were sent to Rome for confirmation, and met with the warm approval of the Pope, who returned them with a request that St. Charles should hasten to Trent to receive, in his capacity of Papal Legate, the Emperor Maximilian's sisters, and conduct them to Ferrara and to Tuscany respectively. It was whilst fulfilling this duty that he was summoned to the death bed of the Pontiff. He arrived in time to administer the last Sacraments to the dying Pope, and, together with St. Philip Neri, assisted him to make a holy death. St. Charles, desirous that the new Pontiff

should be one eager for reform, laboured to procure the election of the Cardinal of Alessandria, who became the able and saintly Pius V. Three months later, being again free to return to his diocese, he began there in good earnest his reforming work. It would be impossible even to mention the various changes effected by him; suffice it to touch on the most important.

The city of Milan was one of the largest in Italy, and the diocese contained over 2,000 churches. The clergy numbered over 3,000, and there were in addition 70 convents of women, omitting 20 suppressed by St. Charles, and 100 communities of men. The diocese had an area of over 100 miles, including parts of Venice and Switzerland, and extended even along the shores of the Mediterranean. The rough and wild passes of the Alps and the nature of the country generally, made it difficult to traverse. No archbishop had resided in Milan for more than eighty years, and, owing to the want of any ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the diocese was like a field overgrown with weeds. This sad state of things was fully realized by the Archbishop, whose first care was to regulate his own household. That at least was to be exemplary. Both for the spiritual and temporal welfare of those in his house, who for the most part were ecclesiastics, he laid down rules to be rigidly observed. Possessed of an extraordinary gift of recognizing at once the qualities and capabilities of those with whom he came in contact, he tested severely their character, and any one showing signs of ambition would not long be tolerated by him. It was his wish to train an efficient band of auxiliaries to help him in his work of reform, and he brought back with him from Rome many priests distinguished for piety and learning. Thus from the household of St. Charles there issued later men illustrious alike for learning and spirituality.

He next turned to the regulation of his diocese, and his scheme of organization is a marvel for its minuteness of detail. He was careful that every office should be filled by earnest workers, who numbered nearly four hundred. All received salaries from him, and were

forbidden to receive presents of any kind. When not away in the diocese, they resided in his palace, and those whom he had appointed as "Visitors" met in his presence every week for what was called "The Congregation of Discipline," when all matters needing reform were discussed, and the wants of each separate district and parish made known. Another congregation had for its object the care of religious houses, a vicar and visitors having charge of the spiritualities, while another body, composed partly of clergy and partly of laymen, were responsible for all temporal matters. Thus deprived of the load of business cares, the religious were able to apply themselves solely to their spiritual advancement, and St. Charles, by visits and by words of encouragement and counsel, filled them with a desire of good.

The Sovereign Pontiff had placed several religious orders under the protection of the Cardinal, and among them the Order of St. Francis needed his special care. With the idea of reforming themselves, the religious had separated into various branches, which in course of time had all become equally degenerate, and, by reason of their separation, had lost the restraining influence and support of the main body. Many lived in separate houses, surrounded by luxury, enjoying revenues in a way that made their lives little different from those of the outside world. All idea of equality had vanished; interior factions had destroyed the peace of the cloister, and the beauty of virtue had ceased to appeal to their minds. To suppress such abuses, St. Charles determined to unite the different denominations into one body, to forbid to the superiors all claim to personal property, and to found a noviciate in which a love of holy poverty should be enforced, thus restoring to the Order its ancient splendour and the spirit of its seraphic founder. At a congregation convoked by the Cardinal for the appointment of a new Father-General, he met with considerable opposition, the monks insulting and threatening him, besides treating with contempt the authority of the Holy See in his person. Though St. Charles displayed great discretion and patience in dealing

with them, he was determined to accomplish his end, and when the monks had once acknowledged their fault and accepted his decrees, he treated them with paternal charity and mercy, and even pleaded with the Pope on their behalf.

The Franciscans, however, did not prove such an obstacle in the way of monastic reform as the order known as the "Frati Umiliati." St. Charles had obtained from Rome two briefs, one empowering him to employ a part of the revenues of the superiors of all houses of the Order in the foundation of a noviciate, the other to enforce any regulations he might deem necessary for the introduction of a serious reform. Unable openly to resist his determination to uproot the evil practices of their Order, these religious accepted his reform apparently with submission, but only to break out later in a spirit of rebellion against him as crafty and sinister as it is possible to imagine.

Meanwhile the cathedral and its chapter had not escaped the attention of the Cardinal, who recognized the necessity of making the metropolitan church a model for the rest of his diocese. Especial care was given to the regulation of the chapter. Owing to insufficient means, the canons had been obliged to accept a multiplicity of benefices, which hindered them from residence, and so crippled the services of the cathedral that the daily recital of the Divine Office was often rendered impossible. St. Charles suppressed a few canonries altogether, and amalgamated their revenues with other sums procured for the purpose of enforcing residence by supplying the canons with sufficient incomes. It was a great joy to his heart that they accepted these reforms with docility. He knew they could be of great assistance to him, and it was his desire to gain their affection, and to be able to regard them as fellow-workers, to whom he could always turn for support. He took great delight in being much in their society, and always joined them in choir when his duties permitted. Each had his own special duties, and they took their turn in teaching, preaching, and hearing confessions in the cathedral,

as well as in carrying out the functions with due dignity and decorum. The cathedral itself underwent great changes, St. Charles being zealous that it should be made a worthy house of God. Accordingly he removed all non-ecclesiastical monuments, and substituted holy statues and pictures to aid the devotion of the people. The choir was magnificently restored and richly decorated, and the high altar raised so as to be seen by all. The singers were divided into different choirs, and only music of an elevating character was allowed, all instruments, except the organ, being prohibited. Sacristans with different functions were appointed, and everything was regulated so as to procure reverent and orderly behaviour among those attending the services. It must indeed have been a source of consolation to our Saint to see the devotion which his reform produced in his flock. The people of Milan, attracted by these wonderful changes, began to attend the cathedral again, and on Sundays and holidays spent long hours in prayer and in listening to their Archbishop, who frequently broke to them the Word of God. St. Charles desired to spread the reform to the other churches of his city, for all had need of it. In every parish he strictly enforced residence, and where this had become impossible, because of the priest holding more than one cure, he ruled that all except one, which he left to their choice, should be given up, and undertook to supply what was thereby deficient in the revenue.

The Saint would gather together his priests and learn from each his mode of living and the spiritual requirements of their parishes, thus rendering it the easier for him to provide for them by decrees in the periodical synods and councils. He also encouraged the establishment of societies and confraternities in each parish and gave them rules for their institution. One more strongly approved of by St. Charles than any other was that of "St. John the Beheaded," which had for its object the charge of criminals condemned to death, and in which he enrolled many laymen of high position. He made a point of visiting formally the whole city and diocese

twice every year, and would often go the round of all the churches of the city in a day, that one might not warn another of his approach.

St. Charles regarded these pastoral visits as of the greatest importance for the welfare of his diocese, but they often entailed great hardship and even extreme peril upon him. When we reflect on the difficulties of travel and the scanty means of communication in those days, as well as on the nature and extent of the country to be traversed, we are filled with astonishment at the wonders he accomplished in this way. He journeyed over high mountain passes possible only on foot, or even occasionally on hands and feet, through wild and desolate districts, in winter snow and summer heat, sleeping on the bare ground at night and on the morrow again toiling onwards to reach a small hamlet where lay some scattered sheep. Once, when travelling among the Swiss mountains where his road lay along a narrow path running by a deep ravine, the mule on which he was riding slipped, and fell on him, and it was only by a miracle that both were saved from falling over the abyss. He made a point of lodging in the priest's house, though it was often poor and bare. He would lie on a board to let one of his company take his bed, or satisfy his hunger with a few chestnuts and milk that others might have sufficient food. Yet even in the most remote districts, the outward ceremonial of all he had to do was minutely observed. His chief joy in these visitations was to give Holy Communion, and he sometimes spent long hours in this holy occupation without any apparent signs of fatigue. His words of love cheered the fallen, enkindled fresh ardour in the lukewarm, and led to greater perfection those whose lives were already dedicated to God. He never left a district until he had swept away all the abuses he noticed in it, taken full account of its wants, and given instructions for the improvement and beautifying of the church. The number of new churches he consecrated was enormous, and he preceded each consecration by a rigid fast and a night spent in prayer before the relics.

Switzerland, of which the Cardinal was Apostolic Visitor, claimed a large share of his attention. Situated on the borders of Germany, it was a prey to heretics, who lost no opportunity of snatching the Faith from the simple souls, that had not the learning to withstand them. Lamentable indeed was the general disorder and state of indifference. From the ignorant priests the churches received little or no attention; the Sacraments were utterly neglected, and the Blessed Eucharist treated with scant reverence. Several of the Swiss valleys were under the jurisdiction of the See of Milan, but any authority over them had long ceased to be exercised by the archbishops. St. Charles, with the deference he always showed towards temporal power, invited the cantons to promote his work of reform by joining him in enforcing discipline, and, in spite of the bigotry previously shown towards Catholics, the civil authorities were unanimous in treating him and his proposals with respect. He impressed upon the clergy the necessity of walking worthy of their vocation, and laid down strict rules against children going to heretical schools and against the admission of heretics into the Catholic cantons under any pretext whatever. He sent well-instructed priests from Milan, who by the holiness of their lives would edify the people, and raise them from the condition into which they had sunk by contact with unbelievers. But perhaps the greatest work of St. Charles on behalf of Switzerland was the establishment of the Swiss College in Milan. The entrance of any but Swiss ecclesiastics into the country was forbidden, so that it was essential for the natives to be efficiently trained, if they were to maintain the people faithful in their allegiance to the Sovereign Pontiff.

It must not, however, be imagined that St. Charles's work of reform never met with any check or opposition. This was far from being the case, nor would it be the work of God unless it bore the mark of the Cross. The storm of persecution raised against him emanated chiefly from the Senate of Milan. The city at this period was under the dominion of Spain, with a resident Governor

appointed by the King. When St. Charles was appointed Archbishop, the Governor was one of whom the Saint spoke in terms of highest praise, "so good, so religious, so devoted to our Lord as I should never have imagined him to be," ever ready to assist the Archbishop in his projects, but the supreme authority did not rest in his hands but in those of the Senate. Now after the first Provincial Council, the members of the Senate, finding that its decrees closely affected their lives and the ruling of their passions, vainly endeavoured to interfere with the authority of the Archbishop, and sought for means to throw off his yoke. An opportunity for so doing soon presented itself. Some laymen, whose lives were notoriously scandalous, refused to listen to the repeated admonitions of St. Charles, and were at length brought before the ecclesiastical tribunes, then working in full force, and imprisoned. Loud was the outcry of the Senate, who, nevertheless, dared not openly disobey the decrees of St. Charles. Now, in accordance with an ancient right, the Archbishop maintained a secular body of men with a chief officer of justice at their head, who had the right to carry arms and imprison offenders against religion and morals. The officer and his men were warned by the Senate that they were disobeying a law of the Governor, and were threatened with severe punishment, unless they desisted from carrying arms. With much prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, St. Charles sought by every means in his power to conciliate the Senate, while not conceding any of the rights of the Church. Its members, however, proved obdurate, and he was at length obliged to lay the matter before the Sovereign Pontiff, at the same time giving a true version of it to the King of Spain. The storm grew more and more fierce against the saintly Archbishop, for the evil passions of those who sought to hinder the work of God were aroused and not easily laid to rest. The Archbishop's chief officer was seized and cruelly treated, then driven from the city and threatened with the gallows should he attempt to return. Great was the grief of St. Charles at seeing the authority

of the Church thus flagrantly set at nought, and he shed many tears at the wickedness of those who could have assisted him in his work for Christ, yet chose to promote that of the devil. Reports were even spread that his reforms were intended for self-aggrandizement, that his sanctity was but a cloak to ambition, and that he was an intriguer endeavouring to hide his dangerous designs. This loving pastor, whose one thought was God, deeply felt the sting of these unjust accusations, but did not allow them in any way to ruffle his tranquil spirit or cause his confidence in God to falter, though they led astray many falterers and chilled the ardour of even his most devoted followers. It was time to take decided measures to defend the rights of Holy Church, and St. Charles excommunicated the chief of police and others in authority who were implicated in the outrage on his officer. The offenders were summoned to appear at once in Rome, together with the president of the Senate and two senators.

During the pause which ensued, fresh methods were found of hindering the work of our Saint. The Governor was persuaded by the enemies of St. Charles, that now was a fitting opportunity for a display of loyalty, and published an edict declaring that severe punishment would be meted out to all who violated in any way the jurisdiction of the King. Such a measure, bearing on the face of it an attack on the Archbishop, could not but cripple his work and embolden men to act against all ecclesiastical jurisdiction and rely on the secular power to support them. This indeed happened at a collegiate church at Milan known as "Santa Maria della Scala," the Chapter of which was under the patronage of the King of Spain. The canons had applied to Pope Clement VII. (1530) for exemption from the jurisdiction of the See of Milan, and their petition had been granted, provided the consent of the Archbishop was obtained; but as it never had been obtained, the privilege remained invalid. St. Charles, knowing this house to be no exception to the other religious houses of the city in its need of reform, pro-

posed to visit it, but was at once met with opposition from the Chapter, who pleaded exemption from his visit on the ground of the forenamed privilege, and declared their intention of not receiving him. The Archbishop, nothing daunted, sent a deputy to them to announce his visitation to be made in conformity with the wishes of the Pope, and arrived at the cloister, clothed in his episcopal vestments, seated on a mule, with the crucifix carried in front of him. Armed men, who had been engaged by the canons, at once rushed upon him, and a scene scandalous beyond all description ensued. Amid the clanging of bells, the clashing of arms, and the violent jostling of an infuriated mob, the Vicar-General affixed to the door the censure the canons were about to incur, only to see it snatched down and torn in pieces. Dignified and calm as ever, the Archbishop stood in the midst of the scene, regardless of danger, his eyes fixed on the crucifix, with no word of remonstrance escaping from his lips, and only when he found the door barred in his face did he pronounce the words of excommunication and retire. Pius V. was grieved at the affair, and sent a letter of consolation to the Cardinal, at the same time summoning the two ringleaders to Rome, who, however, met with a sudden end before they reached Rome, while another of the band, who had fired on the cross, met with a violent death. These events filled the rest of the Chapter with terror that a like doom might await them unless they speedily repented. The Provost was the first to come to St. Charles and humbly beg for forgiveness. The others followed more slowly, but were received with great charity by the Archbishop. It was with difficulty that he obtained leave from the Pope to deal with them himself, for his Holiness deeply felt the injury done to the rights of the Church and to the Cardinal whom he esteemed so much. After a public confession of their faults, they received absolution and went in procession to their cloister, St. Charles accompanying them and offering prayers before he reinstated them.

It is not improbable that the canons were moved to

contrition by a miracle wrought by God to preserve His chosen servant. Mention has already been made of the Order of "Frati Umiliati," and of the contest between them and the Archbishop. Though now outwardly passive, evil intentions still lurked in their hearts, and, encouraged by the revolt of the canons della Scala, they plotted to take the life of the Cardinal, and a Judas was not hard to find, who for the sake of gold was willing to do the deed. It was customary in the household of St. Charles to meet for prayer every evening after the Angelus. These services were open to the public, and were attended by large numbers. Among the crowd there came one evening a member of the Frati dressed as a layman, who took up his position within five yards of the Archbishop. Raising a weapon loaded with a ball and pieces of lead, he fired and struck his victim. A panic ensued, during which it was easy for the perpetrator of the crime to escape unobserved. The saintly Cardinal, thinking he had been mortally wounded, instantly forgave his murderer and rejoiced that God had allowed him to give his life in His service. Such was not the case however, for the ball had not even pierced his clothes, but only marked his vestment and fallen to the ground, though one of the pieces of lead gave him a bruise, the mark of which never left him to his death. The whole city hurried to the palace to express their joy at the miraculous escape of their beloved Archbishop, who convoked his clergy, and having gone with them in procession to the cathedral to return thanks to God, withdrew from the joyous citizens to a convent, there to refresh his soul by prayer.

To battle against ill-health, caused by overwork and austerity of life, to combat difficulties which seemed daily to increase, to support and console his people in the hardships they were about to endure, St. Charles needed that strength which can only come direct from God. A terrible famine had reduced Milan to the direst want, and the Saint exerted himself to the utmost to keep his poor from starvation. For three months he

fed over three thousand people at his own expense, and, having rendered himself penniless, collected alms from every quarter. "Charity," he was wont to say, "should know no bounds, neither therefore must almsgiving." To make matters worse, a fall of snow, unprecedented in heaviness, filled the minds of all with fear, lest when it melted the flood should carry away whole villages, and destroy the grain that had been sown. St. Charles called upon his flock to unite with him in prayer and fasting, and the disaster was averted. At the same time a calamity was threatening the Church at large, and causing the aged Pontiff, Pius V., grave anxiety. The Turks had prepared an attack against Christianity which could only be met by the united resistance of European Powers. St. Charles ordered public prayers and solemn processions to implore the mercy of God, and the ardent prayers of the people of Milan united with the pleading in every country, gained for the Church the signal victory at the Battle of Lepanto (October, 1571).

It was with difficulty that St. Charles now continued his pastoral labours, for his health was seriously injured by anxieties and austerities. His food for the most part was bread and water, his nights were chiefly spent in prayer, while his days were full of unceasing toil. It was in this state of weakness that he learnt the death of the Pope—news which deeply troubled him. In spite of the remonstrances of his physicians, he journeyed to Rome to take part in the election of the new Pontiff, Gregory XIII. During the six months that he remained in Rome his sanctity was an edification to all, but his ill-health caused much anxiety. He was persuaded to consult physicians, who however did not agree as to the best remedy for him, and the Saint decided to abandon them entirely and to renew his fasts and disciplines with fresh vigour. Hence abstinence came to be called "the remedy of St. Charles." From the new Pope he asked permission to resign many of the offices he still held in Rome, that he might be the more free to devote himself to his own diocese.

His return to Milan was the occasion for a fresh storm

of persecution breaking out against him, directed as before by the governing body of the city. It was now under a new Governor, who from the first acted in open defiance of the Cardinal. To celebrate his appointment, he organized a fight of wild beasts to be held during the carnival in the space outside the cathedral. St. Charles forbade such a show under pain of excommunication, and the Governor retaliated by holding public games on days set apart for devotion at the very hour of divine service. But his efforts to prevent the people from attending the churches were vain, for the influence of the Archbishop was too powerfully felt by them, and before the Governor could devise fresh methods for alluring them, he was overtaken by death. His successor was a personal friend of St. Charles, and it was hoped that a time of peace and prosperity was in store for Milan. But the Cardinal's hopes were destined to be disappointed. In the previous contest concerning ecclesiastical and secular jurisdiction, some letters falsely incriminating St. Charles had been obtained by the senators from Spain, the publication of which would naturally prove detrimental to the authority of the Church. The former Governor, knowing them to be libellous, had refrained from making any use of them, but the existing ruler, though threatened by St. Charles with excommunication, published them by sending them, in the absence of the Archbishop, to his Vicar-General. St. Charles, by every device that charity could suggest, endeavoured to check the evil at the outset, but the Governor remained obdurate, and the Cardinal published the order of excommunication, thus again exposing his life in defence of the rights of the Church. The Governor, more than ever enraged, retaliated by forbidding all meetings of societies and confraternities unless a magistrate were present, and confiscated the castle of Arona, on the borders of Switzerland, which belonged to St. Charles; moreover, to give colour to his assertion that the Cardinal was wanting in loyalty to the King, he placed a guard around his palace. Though he succeeded in filling the inmates of the house with alarm, he could never shake St. Charles's trust in

God or ruffle his exterior calm and patience. His life continued its even tenor, and longer hours were given to prayer. The affair was at length brought to a termination by the King, who transferred the Governor to Flanders.

This work of defending the rights of the Church did not interrupt the progress of the wonderful organization, carried on by the Archbishop for the spiritual profit of the diocese. The synods, at which sometimes as many as 1,500 priests attended, continued to assemble every year, and it is difficult to form an idea of the scope of the regulations made by St. Charles to meet not only every contingency in the spiritual life, but also the exterior deportment of both clergy and people. The Provincial Councils also were held every three years, and it was the custom of St. Charles to send their decrees to bishops in every country as models for reform. But it was specially to the power of prayer that the Saint looked for success in his undertaking. Ardently did he entreat the people to beg of God to bless these assemblies and to offer their good works for that intention. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was held on the previous Sunday, and processions wended their way to the cathedral to implore the Divine mercy.

Great was his influence with his suffragans, and happy his dealings with the religious Orders. Mention has already been made of the Society of Jesus, which he held in high esteem alike for the integrity as for the profound learning of its priests. He often defended them when persecuted, and the last letter of his life bears testimony of his regard for the Company "so meritorious and so useful." A confraternity known as that of "Christian Doctrine" had been erected shortly before St. Charles arrived in Milan, having for its object the teaching the truths of religion and the instruction of the young. It was reorganized by the Archbishop and became a means of help in teaching, and later in almost every branch of charity. As it was found as difficult in those days as in these to persuade children to attend school regularly, he instituted a band of men

known as "Fishers," and gave them authority to collect children from every street and conduct them to school. The office was much sought after, even the nobility considering it an honour to wear the badge of a "fisherman."

But of all the Orders employed by St. Charles the Congregation of the "Regular Clerks of St. Paul," commonly called "Barnabites," after the title of their church, deserves special attention. Owing to the large increase in its numbers, its constitutions needed revision, and it was to St. Charles that they applied for aid and ever regarded him in consequence as their second founder. The General of the Order, Dominic Sauli, a man of considerable reputation in the Church, had been a fellow-student of St. Charles at the University of Pavia, and during his first years in Milan the Cardinal had greatly relied on his advice. The Franciscans and Carmelites, the Jesuits and Capuchins were also largely employed by him.

Yet the ever-increasing needs of his vast diocese, the difficulty of ruling so many colleges, seminaries, and charitable institutions, his countless projects and schemes still in their infancy, had brought home to him the necessity of founding a body of men who would act now as his auxiliaries, and after his death carry on the work of reform. He therefore resolved to found a Congregation of secular priests, who should unite with a diocesan life the spirit of a religious community under the sole authority of the Bishop, to whom he gave the name of "Oblates of St. Ambrose." Our Blessed Lady and St. Ambrose were chosen as the patrons of the new religious, and the Congregation was enriched with privileges and indulgences by Pope Gregory XIII. It was not for three years that any definite rule was given to them, and then only after their founder had submitted it to the judgment of St. Philip Neri. The devotions started by St. Philip in the Oratory at Rome, consisting of preaching and prayer, interspersed with music, had proved so successful in winning souls to God that they were used as a model by St. Charles for the reunions

held by his Oblates. The name "Oblate" is an index to the spirit of the foundation; theirs was a life of willing oblation, their only vow being one of obedience to the Archbishop. They were to live together in the spirit of the early Christians, zealous only for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Though their special object was to aid the Archbishop in the government of his diocese, yet they were to strive after that religious perfection only to be attained by a life free from contact with the world. To preach, to take temporary care of parishes, to go, like Apostles, into the remote corners of the diocese; to teach colleges, seminaries, and poor schools; in short, to supply the spiritual necessities of men wherever they might be wanting—such was to be their aim and work. St. Charles was the guiding spirit of the Order, which in his eyes was the choicest fruit of his labours. He loved the religious as his own sons: his delight was to withdraw himself from the cares of his daily life to find solace and spiritual refreshment in the humbler life of those amongst whom he was the most humble. In their company he would sometimes remain for weeks, observing the rule in its minutest detail. If any were ill, he would nurse them with tender devotion by day and by night. Once when one of them, renowned for virtue and learning, was at the point of death, St. Charles implored God so fervently to spare him, that he miraculously recovered. Wonder was expressed at the extreme anxiety shown by him for this soul. "You know not," he replied, "of what value is the life of a good priest." The Order grew apace, and to it were affiliated many of the laity, with rules applicable to their station in life.

Many, too, were the hospitals, houses of mercy, homes of refuge, and such-like institutions, established by the Cardinal and maintained in many cases at his own expense. Where the fallen needed raising, he was their support; where the sick were uncared for, he was their consolation; where children were ignorant, he taught them; where God was unknown, he preached and renewed the Faith.

The year 1575 was sanctified by Pope Gregory XIII. as a Holy year of Jubilee, and, that it should be opened with great pomp and ceremony, he convoked all the Cardinals to assist at the function. It had been the intention of St. Charles to satisfy his devotion by a pilgrimage to Rome at a later period in the year, but the slightest wish of the Holy Father was a law to him, and he set out at once. One of his companions has described the journey in a letter: "Throughout the whole route the Cardinal ate nothing but bread, nuts, and some dried raisins. We arrived, always late at night, at some inn where we were not expected. Scarcely had we descended from our horses, covered with mud, frozen with cold, often wet through, always very tired, than we went at once to the Archbishop's room, where on our knees we finished the Office, to which he added litanies, then devoted some time to silent prayer, and concluded with an address. These exercises would last for two hours, after which we thought of the needs of the body and went to bed. About two or three o'clock the following morning we recited the first part of the Office and prepared ourselves for the Divine Mysteries, which were celebrated by every one. All was not finished before five o'clock, the hour fixed for re-mounting." St. Charles remained about six weeks in Rome, and, apart from the time spent with the Holy Father, devoted himself to visiting the churches, which he often did barefooted.

The following year the Jubilee was published in Milan, and St. Charles used every means to persuade the people to profit by the privilege he had obtained for them, and published a book of prayers, with an account of the relics exposed in the different churches to be visited. The pilgrims coming from afar were guided on their way by large crosses erected on the roads, recalling to mind the Passion of our Lord, and the object of their visit, and on arrival were accommodated in houses specially set apart for them. Never had the city witnessed such scenes of penance and signs of fervour. Processions of men and women, clothed in sackcloth,

carrying crucifixes in their hands, recited litanies from church to church, while the Cardinal, ever the first to give his flock an example, went barefooted through the streets, and waited on the pilgrims, washing their feet in humble imitation of the divine charity of Christ.

Had the necessity of penance been more taken to heart during this season of religious enthusiasm, the people of Milan might have averted the terrible scourge with which God thought fit to visit them, and which shows our Saint in a new light, no longer merely as an ecclesiastical reformer, but as an apostle of charity. To his children in distress he is a tender father, to the dying a sweet consoler, to the sick a loving nurse healing with gentle touch, to all an angel from heaven breathing life and hope where death and despair had begun to reign.—Returning from the funeral of one of his bishops, he was met by a courier who hastened to meet him with the news that the plague had broken out in the city. The Governor and most of the nobility had fled to the country, leaving the people in a state of panic and disorder, for the very name of plague was sufficient to inspire all with terror, seeing that twice before the city had been devastated by it. Surrounded by crowds of fear-stricken people, the Archbishop received at his palace the magistrates who had come to beg his advice in dealing with the afflicted, and in adopting measures to prevent contagion. The Saint promised to do all in his power for them, to give up his life, if need be, for his people in such distress, and reminded his clergy that they, too, were in duty bound to expose their lives to danger in giving the plague-stricken every attention. Should any fall sick in so doing, he promised to give them the Sacraments with his own hands.

Regarding himself as laden with the sins of his flock, he strove to appease the anger of God by severe penances. Whenever he appeared in the streets the poor threw themselves at his feet, kissing his garments and imploring help from him to whom alone they could turn. To the miseries of plague those of

famine were soon added. Shut off from all intercourse with the outside world, commerce had ceased, and hundreds of unemployed were wandering about in want of bread. The authorities had neglected to provide in any way for the sick, and the large hospital of San Gregorio was a disgrace. Here, as soon as they were attacked, whole families were enclosed in a veritable prison, without means of subsistence or any one to care for them when alive, or to bury them when dead. St. Charles visited this house, and was filled with sorrow at the suffering he witnessed. Tears and groans of despair, mingled with the shrieks of the dying, drew compassionate tears from his eyes. He gave them his blessing before leaving, and sent them food and clothing. It is said that the blessing of the Saint worked many cures during the plague, and that the members of his household lost their dread of it in his presence, while of the eight who always accompanied him in the street, none ever fell a victim to it. S. Gregorio was full, and hundreds were still left destitute; so St. Charles built some isolated houses without the city, and put them in charge of religious.

But the number to be provided for daily increased, and a stream of starving men and women flowed unceasingly to the Archbishop's palace, and there threw themselves on his mercy, though he was now nearly as destitute as they were. To feed daily between sixty and seventy thousand people, he had stripped himself and his house of everything of value, and borrowed sums of money which took him years to repay. Often he returned tired and hungry from a long day spent in administering the Sacraments to the dying, to find his house empty of all provisions, so that his steward was obliged to beg some bread for him. Of his unbounded charity to sufferers who lay by the wayside, there are countless examples; passing by a Capuchin lying on a straw bed at the point of death, he wrapped his own cloak round his frozen body and remained with him until the soul had passed away. Like a tender father, he carried in his arms many infants whom he found

exposed in the streets at night, or lying by the bodies of their dead parents.

But while St. Charles was endeavouring by every precaution to hinder the progress of the plague, he bore in mind that it was a visitation of the wrath of God, and that coming from Him, could only be stayed by Him. Seven times a day public prayers were said in the streets and processions were frequently made, in one of which the relics of the various churches were carried to aid the devotion of the people, St. Charles himself bearing the relic of the Holy Nail, by the sight of which he hoped to move the people to greater devotion to the Passion of our Saviour. It was a wonderful spectacle, and not a single person contracted the plague during the course of its progress.

With the beginning of the new year (1577) the plague began to abate, and St. Charles published the Jubilee in the towns of Italy that had been ravaged by it, and Milan began once more to assume its old aspect. The law of quarantine was withdrawn, but too soon, as the event showed, for the plague had by no means ceased its ravages, and to avoid so terrible a calamity as its return, the Archbishop urged the people to make a vow to St. Sebastian, the martyr, whose mother was a Milanese, promising to rebuild the church dedicated to him, if he would deliver them. This promise was faithfully fulfilled, and from that moment every trace of the plague vanished. In a touching appeal, the Saint entreated his flock to profit by the recent punishment of God to lead a more Christian life, and drew up books of devotion adapted to every station in life. His *Memoriale*, a small work of great importance, containing an account of the evils with which he had to contend in his diocese, was specially addressed to his suffragans. To compile these books the Saint deprived himself of his already small amount of sleep, and owing to the long strain of the plague-time, he was often now in a state of great exhaustion. Sometimes he would fal asleep while dictating to his secretary, but on awakening would continue exactly where he had left off, so that it

was difficult to know if he were only apparently drowsy or in reality intensely recollected.

St. Charles, having revisited the Swiss Cantons and the rest of his diocese, was able to satisfy a long-cherished desire of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Winding-Sheet at Turin. The journey of ninety miles, to be made on foot, was divided into four days, throughout which the Saint and his company were occupied in spiritual exercises, only interrupted by the crowds who came from every village to implore his blessing. The Duke of Savoy, in whose keeping this most sacred relic was, entertained St. Charles with the dignity that befitted so revered a Cardinal and so holy a man; but no honour could in any way detach the thoughts of the Saint from the object of his visit. Words fail in describing his devotion, when, for long hours in front of that memorial of the Sufferings of our Redeemer, absorbed in contemplation, it seemed as though his soul had left this earth and winged its flight to unite with the purer adoration of heaven. The mysteries of the Passion were throughout his life the special object of his devotion, and an opportunity of satisfying it was given him at Monte Alverno, where St. Francis received the Stigmata, which he visited on his way to Rome, whither he was forced to proceed, owing to the renewed and vicious attacks of the Governor of Milan. It is hard to believe that after his heroic devotion at the time of the plague, fresh opposition could be shown him; but this base ingratitude was the Governor's revenge for the rebuke given him by the Archbishop for deserting the people in their hour of need. Returning triumphant from Rome, he visited the diocese of Brescia, where he reconciled many heretics to the Church, and met the youthful son of the Marchese di Gonzaga, afterwards known as St. Aloysius.

The year 1584, the last of the Saint's life, was opened by an assembly of the rural deans and visitors of his diocese, which lasted three weeks, to report on the enforcement of the synodal decrees. The diocese of Milan might now indeed be regarded as reformed; much had been changed, but still more had been built

up; great opposition had been shown, but much generous support received. The love of the people for their Archbishop was very real, and their grief at an unfounded report of his death was loud and bitter. St. Charles, knowing he was soon to leave his flock, concentrated his failing energies on the completion of the reform in which his life had been spent. He was suffering from erysipelas in the leg, and though obliged to remain in bed, had himself placed where he could receive his clergy and transact all affairs as usual. Throughout the Lent of this year he fasted strictly, his sole food being dried figs. In April he held his last Synod, preaching four sermons to his clergy, which his biographer pronounces the most powerful and fervent he ever delivered. He hinted it was the last occasion on which he would address them, and they listened with mingled feelings of joy at the sweetness of his words and of sorrow that they were soon to lose so loving a father and so powerful a guide. In spite of constant suffering, he made his pastoral visits as usual in the heat of the summer, and as he approached his end, his charity shone forth with redoubled splendour. He longed for death, always speaking of it with pleasure, and made his annual retreat in the secluded chapels of Monte Varallo, whither he had often gone in pilgrimage, and there contracted the fever which was the cause of his death. His feeble condition made him leave for Milan, that he might die in his own city; with extreme difficulty he visited the College of Ascona on the way home, where he arrived on All Souls' Day. On the morrow he sent for his chaplains, desiring to say Office with them, but so infirm was he, that he could only unite with them mentally, and when they had finished, he bade them recite the Office of the Dead. Around his bed he ordered to be hung pictures representing the sufferings of Christ, from which he scarcely moved his eyes. His perfect serenity never left him, though all around were shedding tears in the depth of their grief. He received Holy Viaticum from the hands of the Archpriest of the cathedral in the presence of all his canons. His servants, remembering his wish to die in sackcloth and ashes,

clothed him in a hair shirt, sprinkling blest ashes on him, while Fr. Adorno, his confessor, stood at the head of the bed holding the crucifix. The room was filled with priests, whose sobs choked the pious utterances they endeavoured to suggest to the Saint. He gave them all his blessing, and then fell back and peacefully passed away.

That same night St. Charles appeared to Fr. Adorno in vision, clad in his pontifical vestments and surrounded with the glory of Heaven, and spoke words of comfort and consolation to him. Vast crowds of people flocked to venerate the body of their beloved Archbishop, and to touch it with their rosaries. The tears of those who had never before been known to shed them, mingled with those of the widow, the orphan, and the poor, who mourned their loss with the abandonment of profound sorrow. His funeral was celebrated by the Bishop of Cremona, afterwards Pope Gregory XIV., and the body was laid to rest in his cathedral at the foot of the choir, a spot chosen by the Saint in life, and where many miracles were wrought after his death. His canonization was begun by Pope Clement VIII. in 1604, and completed under Pope Pius V. in 1610, twenty-six years after his death.

St. Charles Borromeo lived but a few years, yet "being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time." In appearance he was tall, though much bent towards the end of his life by study and austerity. His face was long, his hair almost black, and his eyes blue. His manner, always serious and recollected, was withal courteous and obliging, and he had a smile of great sweetness and charm. It is said he never spoke a useless word, or indulged in any levity of manner; yet his countenance was always cheerful, and he received with a natural kindliness all who came to him. His bearing was calm and simple, combined with much dignity, so that no one could help feeling esteem and respect for him, and it was impossible to speak of anything trivial in his presence. Nothing made him betray the least emotion, while sadness, excitement, or impatience found no

place in him, even in the most trying circumstances. In so great a Saint it is difficult to speak of any special virtues, for indeed he excelled in all. But perhaps with St. Charles the virtue of religion held pre-eminence, a deep spirit of reverence being stamped on all he said and did. He never heard the name of God without uncovering his head. The Word of God was his constant study, and he always read it kneeling and with head uncovered. He daily recited the Divine Office with great devotion, and showed the most minute care and diligence in the observance of all ceremonies connected with the worship of God. This feeling of reverence fostered his respect for the person of the Sovereign Pontiff and for the authority and rights of the Church, and any refusal of allegiance to the Holy See was regarded by him as the greatest of faults.

The most striking outward feature in St. Charles was his spirit of penance. It was, indeed, matter for wonder to all around him how, in the midst of the business and anxieties of his diocese, he could practise mortification in so great a degree. A holy fear of God, combined with an ardent hatred of sin, made him just, upright, and sincere with all men, fearless of the power of princes or of the threats of enemies, regardless of the favour of friends, while a warm love for God and a tender compassion for those who suffer made him humble and charitable, despising the things of earth and full of love for poverty and detachment. His unswerving hope and confidence in God gave him that peace of mind which found vent in constant prayer and contemplation. Beloved of God and men, his memory is held in benediction, his work endures to this day. There was none found like unto him in keeping the law of the Most High, and now he is numbered among the men rich in virtue, studying beautifulness, living at peace in their houses; men of mercy, whose goodly deeds have not failed, whose bodies are buried in peace, and whose name liveth unto generation and generation.

THE PROSPECTS OF CATHOLICISM[1]

By the Rev. W. BARRY, D.D.

"I persist in thinking that the prevailing form for the Christianity of the future will be the form of Catholicism."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Much has been lately written from a hostile point of view on the methods, aims, and actual working of the Catholic Church. It is always possible — and, I suppose, always will be—to set forth in a dazzling light the reasons why Englishmen who loved their freedom, and men of science who remembered Galileo, should have refused to bend the knee before Popes and Congregations; yet when the worst has been uttered, a student of history will be tempted to say in arrest of judgement: "Tarry a little, there is something else." Forces or elements in the past; necessary demands of more than one sort in the present; social, artistic, religious motives on a very great scale, forbid us to imagine that the epitaph of Catholicism will be written during the twentieth

[1] Reprinted by permission of Editor and Publisher, from the *National Review* for October, 1901.

century. It is still among the mightiest of this world's kingdoms, and its borders have been widely extended since the French Revolution threatened to make an end of it altogether.

I wish to estimate some of the causes in virtue of which it is destined not simply to survive but to flourish, and perhaps to rule, in a social state democratic by constitution, tolerant of all beliefs and unbeliefs by law, scientific in its great processes of industry, and subject to rapid developments, or crises, in its daily life. What we perceive at a first glance is eminently unfavourable to the Catholic Church ; but, as we see at a second, not to that Church alone. The art and mystery of religion, whether as a profession or a creed, have come into such peril as never perhaps was since Europe accepted the Christian teaching. Dogma is fading from men's minds ; an apostasy from long-cherished ideals, marked by blank indifference to all preaching and the emptying of churches on Sunday, is noticeable in every large city on every continent. Women hold by religion ; men to an enormous extent do not. The ranks of the clergy are thinning. It is no longer a way of life which leads to renown or holds out prizes tempting enough to draw the most intellectual or vigorous of the rising generation ; and doubt on the one hand, a lack of prestige on the other, diminish the attraction it formerly exercised when the Church governed in partnership with the State. We are entering on a period of intense and convinced, yet largely unconscious, Secularism.

By Secularism I mean Atheism in practice. It is much easier to forget God than to deny His existence ; and these millions have forgotten or never knew Him. Their guide and philosopher is the

social condition in which they were brought up; for they do not reason, they simply imitate. Quite unaware that their unbelief has all the momentum in it of an active disbelief, they would be astonished if they could see themselves in the looking-glass of modern philosophy, which yet might be their salvation. Such a looking-glass, clear and level, has been held up to the century by Professor Haeckel of Jena, in his *Riddle of the Universe*, a book worth reading because it proclaims with absolute frankness the secret many others would fold in silk and samite, of a doctrine by no means rare and probably on the increase.[1] Professor Haeckel assures us that religion has, at last, received its deathstroke from "science." To sum up his conclusions without appearing rhetorical, is difficult; and rhetoric, on these solemn subjects, will sound hollow. But this much may be said. The Professor declares that, like Frederick II. of Prussia, he is a confirmed "atheist and thanatist"; to his thinking, Nature has been proved to be a scheme of blind energies, of ceaseless transmutations, with no intellect guiding them, which proceed from zero to zero and back again. Providence is a myth. All things come to pass, indeed, by fixed mechanical necessity, or, as Goethe sings in oracular stanzas, by "great iron laws," but still without purpose or design, and thus strictly by chance. There is no substance called soul; consciousness, a transient phenomenon, perishes with the body; belief in existence beyond the grave is a superstition. When death arrives all is over. In one word, the old ideals have become incredible as any fiction of Greeks or Hindoos. Their day is done.

[1] *The Riddle of the Universe.* By Ernest Haeckel. English Translation. London: Watts & Co.

Were this frightful picture offered to thousands of modern men as their portrait, I do not see how they could fairly question its accuracy. "Atheists and thanatists" they are, without God in this world or hope in any other. But they would resent the sudden illumination. They do not want to know their own minds. When M. Brunetière, taking this philosophy at its own valuation, defined it as "the bankruptcy of science," there was a loud outcry from the very school of which Professor Haeckel is a leading light. Yet surely, if science can teach no more than we learn from *The Riddle of the Universe*, bankrupt it is to the last farthing. A more absolute negative was never declared. It is the *tabula rasa* of religion, ethics, history, tradition, aspiration. No God, no soul, no conscience, no Hereafter—could any system approach nearer to the term we have called zero? It sweeps away all principles to let loose all instincts. "But," returns the Professor, "it leaves the social instinct, which is morality." The social instinct of brutes, combining to kill and eat their feebler brethren! Or the instinct of apes with their five senses aflame! The war of all against all, which a clearer-sighted man than Professor Haeckel, the atheist Hobbes, could reduce to civilized peace only by means of his *Leviathan*, omnipotent tyranny! Such are the dangers of an immoral and irreligious negation; dangers most real and pressing, as the omens warn us, in London and in Paris, in New York and in Berlin, and wherever society has allowed certain safeguards to be weakened in the rush of competitive commerce or as a homage to the claims of overweening "science." For, it cannot be denied, the ethics which found themselves on a mere social instinct lead directly to the worship of wealth and

pleasure ; they abolish the Categorical Imperative and know not how to forbid with authority passions and desires that had better not be named here. Every lapse in thought from the Christian standard spells degradation for multitudes. But it spells misery too. The experiment of life, reduced to a play of molecular forces, does not correspond to the nature of things ; it is a dream upon which reality is always breaking in, and the dreamer cannot sleep in peace.

Hence the innumerable nightmares which weigh upon modern cities ; and the more advanced their condition, so much the more do they breed these unpleasant phenomena. The American prides himself on his smartness ; but it is in his busiest market-place that spiritism, faith-healing, and impostures wilder than these, flourish exceedingly. In Paris of late years every conceivable superstition has found a home. Among ourselves, the temper which welcomed Neo-Buddhism is not extinct, and ridicule fails to kill the varieties of occult science. An unwholesome mysticism spreads like a fungus over much recent literature ; it will continue to spread so long as Professor Haeckel's unbelief darkens the sky. Let it be granted that there is an eclipse of faith ; who will expect from the abyss of nescience to see a fresh dawn travelling up towards the zenith ? These are tokens, not of health, but of a disease which is too deeply seated for the stethoscope or scalpel of crude Materialism to reach it, still less to contribute towards its removal.

Anarchy in thought, licence in conduct, severe opposition of class interests, and a growing melancholy which betrays itself in the shape of insanity or even suicide, cannot be deemed evidence either of

truth conquering falsehood, or of progress moving on to a higher civilization. We all go by our own experience, and few things have struck me more forcibly than the lack of discipline, the breaking up of character into uncertain impulse, which result from a hearty acceptance of teaching like Professor Haeckel's. When I compare it with the *Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola, it reads like the uncreating word which brings back chaos and repeals Divine Law. Thousands of years ago its fatal formula was discovered, "Nothing is true, everything is permitted." For observe, there can be no inviolable right where appetite is the rule and sanction of conduct. And what is the "social instinct" but appetite? To make a god of society was the Comtist delusion. It has not gained in persuasiveness since Nietzsche called humanity a herd—which truly they would be, and nothing more, did we not view them in the light of an ethics founded on eternal justice and appealing to self-evident intuitions of right and wrong. For want of such an acknowledged and objective standard, we are menaced by a fresh outbreak of barbarism, not from beneath but from above. We shall do well to bear in mind always that it was the French nobles, rather than the French people, who pulled down the oldest monarchy in Europe and made 1793 inevitable.

Society is in danger, and the disciples of an unbelieving science threaten it with destruction. However we regard the Christian creed, is it not manifest that its total disappearance, nay, its effective relegation to a secondary and private rank, would produce changes in the social order as great as must ensue in the physical were the moon to lose

its power over the tides? Greater indeed, for the elements thus unchained would be antagonists by nature; avarice, envy, lust, ambition, all conscious that their time was short, and that no Day of Judgement would follow. How avert so tremendous a catastrophe? That is the question which rises to our lips on hearing of Socialist propaganda, Anarchist assassinations, free-will denied in the name of knowledge, virtue resolved into selfishness, and immortality derided as an impossible fiction.[1] The Christian dogmas have been hitherto real and operative beliefs. Take them away, and an immense vacuum is created, into the depths of which our ancient world must fall headlong, since by Christianity it was built and sustained. What, then, ought to be done in the brief period which may yet be allowed us to withstand the secularist triumph?

Men whose character deserves sincere respect have answered, "Let us turn back to the New Testament and preach the Christianity of Christ." I say so too; but I cannot persuade myself that a living order of things is to be deduced from the pages of a book; or that an abstract Christ, the creation of literature, is really more than a phantom. The experiment of teaching religion from a book alone has been tried, and has ended in disaster. We are looking on, in grief or exultation, at what has been truly called the "passing of Protestantism." Private judgement exercised on the Bible is dissolving it apace, and may be reckoned among the chief causes of our present discontents. When the Puritan gives up his Bible, nay, when he begins to doubt of it, the ground on which he stands is shaken

[1] This sentence was written a few hours before the assassination of President McKinley.

with earthquake, his religion leaves him, and he turns for comfort to making money on principles which it is hard to distinguish from the lowest form of Positivism. The Christ of the Gospel vanishes; Mammon reigns in His stead. Is not that the lugubrious chronicle of New England? Puritan, Unitarian, Universalist—then company-promoting and Wall Street as Jerusalem the Golden! It may be difficult, as one considers these things, not to fall into satire; but satire will not help us towards the spiritual restoration of which we are in search.

Any power that aims at the revival of Christian faith under modern conditions must be independent, world-wide, supernatural, and in its general effect miraculous. From a merely human level it cannot raise mankind out of the slough into which Atheism has betrayed it. No department of State will be equal to such a task, for the State is this fallen society and itself needs redemption. Private effort is laudable at all times; any association which has retained even a fragment of true Christianity will, thus far, be telling in the good cause; but there is only one Church in contact with European and American society which fulfils the conditions required. Independent, supernatural, miraculous—these high epithets have belonged from of old to the Catholic Church, and are hers to-day. She does not preach an abstract or merely historical Saviour; she has never simply relied on a written record; and while she treats with kingdoms and republics as a power of this world, she deals directly with the individual as an ambassador from the next. In one point of view she is accessible to touch and sight; in another she is ideal, spiritual, transcendental. And she fills every period of Christian history with

her achievements, her sufferings, and her victorious resistance to hostile powers.

I am endeavouring to get at the facts, not to palm off on credulous readers (if any such were in the twentieth century) a partisan argument. To clear the ground, I should be prepared, at this stage, to distinguish between Catholicism as a creed and Catholicism as a system, unreal as the distinction seems to me. I will eschew ecclesiastical politics, which, though they fill the "religious" newspapers, are not religion. For reasons which lie on the surface it is natural, but singularly misleading, in this country, to look at the Catholic Movement as an assault on English freedom, and we are treated to quotations from *King John*, or references to the Armada, when we should be considering far deeper problems. In our modern world, Religion is not, as it was in the sixteenth century, an affair of State so much as an affair of the heart. Men follow their taste, or liking, or conscience, when they worship; their beliefs are akin not to party politics, but to their preferences in literature, in friendship, in that portion of their lives which is most under their control and is a matter of choice. Religion is, therefore, something intimate and deeply personal to each; and while politicians stand on their guard against Rome, or statisticians are showing from figures that Catholicism makes no headway, a silent revolution may be moving onward to results no less unexpected than momentous.

Let me give my conclusion in a nutshell. Cardinal Newman, reading history on evidence without straining it, has written that the Pope must, at all events, be recognized as "heir by default" of antiquity. The expression gave some little offence

to certain of his critics, who did not perceive that he took the lowest ground because it was unassailable. In a like spirit, and that I may come to close quarters with my argument, I will say that Catholicism is "heir by default" of primitive Christianity. Though it were true that, on paper, we could trace a system more resembling the organization of which we enjoy glimpses up and down the New Testament than the existing Roman Church, as a matter of fact no such scheme is anywhere visible, or ever was. Strike out Catholic dogma from the ages; imagine the Catholic hierarchy a fiction; and what is left? East answers West that nothing is left. In the concrete, as a religion accepted, acted upon, by nations, and larger than a mere sect or school, the Christian Religion has always been Catholic and is so at the present day. All modern Churches are fragments hurled forth, or broken off, from a centre at which the ancient Faith is still as refulgent as ever. And they remain Christian simply in so far as they keep what they have inherited. Survey them all, from the Anglican on the Extreme Right to the Unitarian or Universalist on the Extreme Left; what have they to call Christian which they have not received from Rome? Christ Himself, the Bible, the sacred ordinances, the creeds,—all were brought to Western Europe and taken thence to America from this single source. Historically, creed and system are not to be divided. Rome is the Mother, as she was during centuries the Mistress, of all the Churches with which we have any concern.

But this, it may be retorted, was an accident; it is ancient history; and now the Churches are independent of Rome. Then, I ask, do they keep the creeds intact? Is the certified Christian dogma which

alone, in history, can be deemed genuine and authentic, safe with them? Are they, or are they not, everywhere breaking down into a Unitarian distrust of the miraculous, and tending to substitute a purely human Christ for the Only Begotten Son of God? The suggestion I make, in no mood of controversy but the opposite, is that in all religious bodies outside Rome great changes are taking place which may rend them asunder, dividing between orthodox and heterodox, and at last between spiritual and secular, in obedience to forces that cannot be reconciled. If they hold by the Faith once delivered, they will approach nearer and nearer to the Roman spirit, and in time to the Roman system. If they suffer the Faith to be resolved and melted down, through stages of what we have termed "Naturalism," until it becomes a form of monistic self-contemplation, they will prove in the clearest way that Rome is, and has never ceased to be, the corner stone of Christian beliefs. I do not know a more serious argument for all who wish to be orthodox, than this appeal to the course of history. Is there, I repeat, any solid ground between Rome and Secularism on which disciples of the New Testament can take their stand?

There was, so millions were taught, before the widespread movement of the last century, which has dealt such fatal blows to Protestant Christians. But now we are seeing, ever more distinctly, that the Reformation, as a constructive effort, has failed. Take its three great forms, personified in Luther the mystic, Calvin the legislator, and Socinus the rationalist. Of Lutheranism not a screed is left; the man towers up yet as a revolting Titan, the rocks which he flung against Olympus have fallen back on the soil, and are dead ashes, vitrified lava. Calvin

has been pictured by his own descendants as a "ghost gone shrieking down the wind"; his writings are credible now to none of us, and his dark theology is made an excuse for believing in no Deity at all. Socinus, where is he? In a sense, everywhere; but logic, working out his principles to their legitimate conclusion, shows them to be the sum of all heresies and the end of dogma. Thus, if we still desire to believe after any intelligible fashion in the Christ whom our fathers worshipped, we must come back to Revelation as untouched by the Reformers. They have played their part and gone their way.

Many thousands every year join the Roman Church from a conviction that it is what an illustrious German Catholic defined it to be, "the objective historical faith of Christ." Many more, among Frenchmen or Italians, who had given it up in their stormy youth, return to it on similar grounds, as M. Bourget tells us in the remarkable prologues which he is putting forth to his collected volumes. Others, like M. Brunetière, moved by social considerations and alarmed at the chaos which they see around them, take the way to Rome as their only chance of salvation. The witness of men like M. Taine, who do not actually join the Church, is if possible more significant still. These declare that the "old Gospel" is necessary now in a degree altogether unprecedented, as a dyke against the coming barbarians. But when we ask them what they understand by the "old Gospel" it turns out to be the Catholic version, not Calvin, not Luther, but "poverty, chastity, and obedience," sanctified by the example of Christ and the medieval or modern Saints. Who, on the other hand, dreams of taking on himself the yoke of the Augsburg or the Westminster Confession?

Where is now that immeasurable Protestant divinity which once sounded from every pulpit in Northern Christendom? It may be discussed in libraries by certain politic worms; it has died off the lips and out of the hearts of ministers, pledged by every solemn engagement to maintain it. Even the Atonement, that primary article, is passed over in a silence not ambiguous by candidates for ordination, and Pelagius dictates the sermon from the pages of Emerson or Carlyle. Of these things the natural, though commonly tacit, inference is a surrender of dogma to the Unitarian.

So far, then, as the historical Christian faith is concerned, the reformers have ended, not mended, it. Their ordinances have been resolved into preaching, preaching into doubt, doubt into a worship of Nature. Professor Haeckel, in his unceremonious manner, terms this middle stage "pseudo-Christianity," and I fear this addition, harsh as it sounds, can scarcely be refuted. Viewing the strict Protestant theology from first to last, we perceive it as a dissolving process, in which the three great objects of primitive belief—Church, Bible, and Redeemer—have been successively explained away.

The Catholic Church has gained at its expense. Four centuries—a long chapter in the world's history—prove that Rome, however charged with corruption, keeps the heart of religion still beating. The Gospel that she received she preaches yet. Her faithful are orthodox Christians, while the rebels, as she foretold them, who separated from her in that name, have shorn it of divinity, and—strange paradox!—are indignant with her because she insists that the Bible is truly God's Word and Jesus of Nazareth His Son. Her faith has not changed, and its permanence

is the measure of their defection. If Luther or Calvin could have foreseen this state of things when they broke away, would it not have left them dumb with amazement? And, observe, the more it is urged that Roman officials are, or have been, a scandal to their high calling; that genius is not to be found in Catholic apologists, or insight and ability among bishops and clergy; so much the more conclusive is our argument in favour of a secret Divine influence which would not suffer its purpose to be undone by such weak and needy instruments.

For it is not by the inertia of dead custom, but amid warfare without ceasing, that Catholic dogma has been preserved against Jansenists, philosophers, revolutionaries, and the terrific onslaught of atheistic science. No man will pretend that the Church has folded her arms and turned aside from battle. "Doomed to death, but fated not to die," she has brought down into this new century her creed and practice, the same in all essentials, and even in language, that we may study in the pages of Tertullian or Cyprian; in brief, she is antiquity, which cannot be laid away in a tomb, but is living an immortal life, as much at home in Chicago or San Francisco as it was in Alexandria or in the Rome of the Cæsars.

This Church, let it never be forgotten, fills the whole Christian time, is its central fact, and yet shows no sign of decrepitude. It is the one cosmopolitan power on earth; and if Christ came to establish a visible kingdom, this must be its head and front. Dogma within, discipline without; a Divine ritual binding them together; certainly nothing so wonderful, no polity so mysterious, can be adduced in comparison from any age or civilization. And for

the last hundred years this unparalleled system has stood upon free and public suffrage ; it is the largest voluntary association ever beheld, yet more intimately connected in head and members than when the Pope disposed of Europe as its sovereign lord.

To exhaust these considerations is not easy, nor can it be requisite. I pass on to the goal to which they point. Seeing that we live in times of a widespread falling away from the ideas and laws by which men professed to govern their conduct until yesterday, it is natural for a religious spirit to inquire if the battle is lost and Christianity doomed. He musters in thought what remains of its fighting squadrons. The banners of Luther and Calvin float on the breeze, but over a deserted camp. Confusion reigns in the once serried lines of Protestantism, which, instead of defending the Bible, are tearing its text to pieces, denying its authority, and scattering its leaves among the Korans, Upanishads, and Avestas of mere Eastern speculations. A Unitarian blight has fallen on the very belief in Christ ; He is no longer the sure refuge from doubt and trouble, but Himself the storm-centre of controversy and a sign to be contradicted. Nor does it appear that the captains of the host are more confident than the rank and file. Much talk has suddenly sprung up about "the Church"—ministers, it is said, may be perplexed, but "the Church" holds an unchanging creed. If so, why does she not produce it and calm the minds of her ministers ? And what is this "Church" ? Is she infallible or indefectible, that she should advance her high pretensions where private judgement was the cry ? How will she establish her claim ? On the Bible ? Then we have got into a magic ring and seem to be prisoners of

a sophism. Until the net is broken, effective warfare against unbelief cannot be resumed.

That Presbyterians and Nonconformists should exalt the Church as endowed with some dogmatic power binding on individuals, is but one instance of a change anticipated scores of years before it happened by intelligent observers. From the religion of a Book, however sacred—from a literary, pulpit service, and a sort of Sunday diagram—the devout have been rudely awakened by the great wind of criticism which has smitten the four corners of the house together. "Bible Christianity," independent of a Divine witness outside its covers, has come to an end, and with it the Reformation. But the religious man hears on all sides of a "Church" which was once the emptiest word in his vocabulary; now he is told of its prerogatives, its commission, its assurance against deadly error. It is a teaching Church; or, as the enemy exclaims, it is "Sacerdotalism" come to life again. Above all is it so in the English Communion, where efforts the most violent and persevering fail to arrest the march of these Catholic traditions, and Low Church and Broad Church are swept along in a movement that has never paused for seventy years. "To those who have eyes to see," wrote Anthony Froude when these things were yet beginning, "there is no more instructive symptom of the age than the tendency of Presbyterian, Independent, and even Unitarian clergy to assume a sacerdotal dress and appearance. Their fathers insisted that between laymen and ministers there was no difference but in name. The modern ministers form themselves into a caste." [1]

So we come round to Milton's sarcasm, "New

[1] Froude's *Studies*, iii. 173.

presbyter is but old priest writ large." The Church of England, especially, as De Maistre foretold in 1816, is playing her part in this extraordinary change of scene and costume. Liturgy, sacrifice, priesthood, that conception of the Christian worship and the inward life which Protestant writers cast out as medieval, as characteristic of the Dark Ages, now finds itself honoured with a pedigree from "the Fathers," who are taken to be authorities beyond appeal. The two ends of history, no longer dissevered, make an unbroken chain. It is more and more recognized that Christianity is a fact—a world of facts—outside our fancies, and not to be evolved from any man's inner consciousness, but real as the Roman Empire was real, with its government, laws, creeds, institutions; the work of a creative spirit, distinct and ascertainable amid heretical aberrations. All its parts hang together; hence, when the Oxford Tractarians began to teach the Apostolic succession, they were warned that the logic of facts would carry them on to full-blown Popery. It has done so. One idea has brought up another; from the decent celebration of the Eucharist they have gone forward to Masses of Requiem, to Reservation, to the cultus of the Madonna, to demands for Roman orders, and to official correspondence with Leo XIII., who in the eyes of not a few is Patriarch of the West, with special claims over the Church of Canterbury. What a revolution in thought, what a change of sentiment, has the nineteenth century witnessed in sturdy Protestants, whose grandfathers called the Pope Antichrist! Rome has yielded nothing; England, as represented by thousands of its clergy and a powerful laity behind them, has granted that in the quarrel of the Reformation dogma was saved by the

Holy See, ruined by Cranmer and his confederates. On every point, it appears, Rome was in the right, except when she maintained that she could not err. Well, she has not erred, if we may believe the verdict of English High Churchmen. Whatever she has added, in their view, to the simple faith, at least she has kept it from dissolution.

Such, too, was the judgement of a famous French writer, Augustin Thierry, at the end of his long studies. "I am an historian," he said, "a tired rationalist who submits himself to the Church. I see the facts; I perceive in history the manifest need of an authority, Divine and visible, if the life of mankind is to grow and thrive. Now, all that exists outside Christendom is of no account. And all that exists outside the Catholic Church is of no authority. The sects are nothing but an oblivion, disregard, and contempt, of history. Therefore, the Catholic Church is the authority I was looking for, and to her I yield. I believe what she teaches; I accept her Credo." [1]

But more than the faith is the life, and here again religious minds will confess that Rome holds up an ideal which comes to us from the New Testament and is directly opposed to the prevailing Atheism. This has been admirably shown in a volume of "Letters," published two years ago by one, himself not a Catholic, who was profoundly aware of the truth so often overlooked, that all the complex agencies, hierarchical, monastic, or devotional, which strangers believe are parts of an ambitious secular policy, do aim, in effect, at something very different and are only means to a supernatural end.[2] I am

[1] Chauvin, *Le Père Gratry*, 364.

[2] See *A Reported Change in Religion*. By Onyx. London: Edward Arnold.

astonished, by the way, that pages so full of thought, so genuine in their sympathy, and so penetrating as criticism, have not attracted the attention which they deserve. Viewing the Roman Church in a variety of aspects, and letting its opponents speak their unvarnished mind, the writer throws out these pregnant suggestions, which I take to be the drift of his reasoning. First, that "at a certain psychological point, perhaps, a man can only choose between the Catholic Church and entire rejection of supernatural Christianity." Such a moment, one would say, has arrived for the Latin races in general, and is approaching faster than most of us think for the intellectual and devout in these islands, and even in America. But second, the volume reminds us that mere historical or philosophical objections to Rome miss the centre of attack, for "the Catholic Church also reasons, but it relies for victory upon prayer, that is to say, upon desire or will to win souls, a desire or will multitudinous, yet disciplined to act collectively, and skilfully directed to its end. This is the faith which moves hearts, if not mountains." And third, says that one of the correspondents from whom we are quoting, "It seemed to me that the Church centred at Rome alone—far, of course, from perfectly, but yet in some measure—realizes the idea of a Church extending itself to all countries, races, languages, and generations. Visible unity seemed to me of the essence of the Christian Church in idea, and its chief utility, so far as realized, in practice." [1]

In reply to these arguments, or enforcing them from a slightly different point of view, it is said by

[1] See *A Reported Change in Religion*, p. 161. By Onyx. London: Edward Arnold.

the man to whom they are addressed, "I find in the Church of Rome much that satisfies my reason, a strong deciding authority, a continuous and unbroken history, a far wider community with fellow human beings than any other Church can offer. . . . Like you, I think that the Catholic Church best fulfils the great ends of religion, namely, association and common worship on the widest scale, continuity, assertion of the mysteries, maintenance of the direction of the heart towards the centre." Bertram Bevor, who subscribes to these apologetics, is not unacquainted with present abuses or past scandals in the long history of Catholic ages, but he goes on to say, "Yet, like St. Peter, Rome has always shown the power to return to the true order of ideas. Like him, too, the Church of Rome has ever been saved by her profound belief in the Divine nature of Christ. She believes in that, and she believes in herself, her commission, and her destiny. Alone among Churches she claims the world as her kingdom. All this is very impressive."[1]

Surely it is so, and none the less that it strikes upon us unbidden, at times or in situations where the controversies of the day, their politics and personalities, seem the most remote from our meditations; perhaps when we look down from the sculptured solitudes of a great foreign cathedral like Chartres upon a land torn with revolutions, or as we contemplate the golden mosaics of St. Mark's, or listen to the fervent singing of a Catholic folk, gathered in their thousands under the soaring spires of Cologne.

We know for certain in such hours that the heart

[1] See *A Reported Change in Religion*, p. 163. By Onyx. London: Edward Arnold.

of Catholicism is Divine worship, addressed to the Supreme *in facie Christi Jesu*. That it is something very ancient, sublime, affecting, and powerful to change us for the better; that it needs no proof but experience, which is within reach of all, the illiterate, the young, the outcast; and that an astonishing harmony runs through the diversities of its operation, as if one inexhaustible anodyne had been discovered for human ills. This, at all events, is worth considering, that in every spiritual crisis the Catholic Church knows what to do, has her fit principles and methods at hand, by which to treat the malady with decision, and without embarrassment. Her confidence in her own resources is unbounded, whether she confronts a Bismarck who relies on his culture and his edicts, or undertakes to tame and civilize Australian blacks into such pieties as are possible for them. She, and she alone, has sounded human nature to the top of its compass; she knows all its stops; and, if we may believe our own record, she would play on them to some divine intent. For millions of us can say, and, indeed, are bound to say, that from the lips of this mighty Mother we have learned religion pure and undefiled.

When, therefore, it is asked, "What are the prospects of Catholicism?" we shall not ascertain them simply by consulting parochial figures, or by casting our lead into the residuum which is made up of lost souls, or by taking a microscopic view of prelates diplomatizing in the Curia, unless we will measure the Atlantic by its froth or its weeds. A more philosophical method is suggested by De Tocqueville as I find him quoted in the "Letters" of Onyx: "Men in our time are naturally little disposed to believe, but as soon as they feel a sentiment of religion, they

are drawn by a hidden instinct towards the ancient Church." And the conditions of modern life tend to raise that instinct, in many hearts, to an imperious desire. Not only do they long after a religion which is something else than their own fancy, but they want the peace, the support, which will bear them up under the daily growing burden of business and competition. To the few, in our time, the prizes; to the many such a strain of anxious care as in a campaign where no armistice ever suspends the fighting, no, not for an hour. Pass from the street or the workshop into a Catholic church, and you will feel the force of that argument. It will not lose its attraction while monopolies flourish.

To say that history, art, religion, present comfort, and future hope, recommend the Catholic devotions, would almost appear to be the same as affirming that unless ideals are utterly to perish, humanity will one day pass on into a great Roman period. If some have left us only to give up the religious life altogether, and are now secularist in their philosophy, the inference for those who believe in God is that Catholicism alone can satisfy our highest aspirations. Countless numbers are indifferent, not because they have rejected the faith, but because they never knew it. What I find it impossible to suppose is that a society which was once Christian will deliberately choose to be "atheist and thanatist," to forswear the noblest beliefs, and to acknowledge nothing beyond its five senses. How long would any form of Western civilization last under these conditions? Men and women will come back, simply because they must, to the tradition of idealism. Not to a dead Christ, but to a living and present Redeemer; in other words, to a history which they can grasp

with their hands, and feel with their hearts, at any moment; which is always *there* when they look up to it. This actual religion, more lively than books, however inspired, closer to us than sermons, be they as eloquent as Bossuet or Chrysostom—an atmosphere which we open our lips and breathe in—is found nowhere else than in the Catholic ritual which, be it observed, never ceases, for its centre is the Real Presence. In this everlasting Sacrament, the unknown God, if we believe, is not far from every one of us. What, in comparison with such a gift, are the petty discords, the obscurities in detail, and the human miseries, which can be paralleled in every system, but not the gift that makes them of little account? "To do it justice," said Hawthorne, in a striking sentence, "Catholicism is such a miracle of fitness for its own ends, many of which might seem to be admirable ones, that it is difficult to imagine it a contrivance of mere man. . . . If there were but angels to work it, the system would soon vindicate the dignity and holiness of its origin."[1]

Yes, and since its ministers are not angels, yet its forms bear upon them such tokens of the Supernatural, will the philosopher conclude that the dignity and holiness were invented by those too inferior demigods? Perhaps the saddest of all sights in this melancholy world is the mishandling, worse than neglect, of our Catholic treasures, our ceremonies, music, architecture, our philosophies and our devotions, by those who should watch over them as at the gate of Heaven. Reformation is always called for, now as in more scandalous times, and in no slight degree. But whether it comes soon or late, a growing number will say with Gerald Beechcroft, in

[1] *Transformation*, chap. xxxviii., beginning.

the volume I commend to all serious readers, "I feel that my true country is the Catholic Church centred at Rome, and that all other forms of thought and religion, however good in themselves, however good they were then for me, and however good they are now for others, were but resting-places on my journey home."

OUR LADY OF REFUGE.

Not far from the town of Bayonne, and near the famous baths of Biarritz, on the borders of the ocean and in the midst of a sandy and pine-grown desert, is a vast religious foundation, which owes its origin to one man, whose name is held in veneration throughout the country—the Abbé Cestac. The following account of its institution came from his own lips:—

In the year 1830, I was a simple curate in the Cathedral of Bayonne, devoted to my poor parishioners and thinking of little else. One day I came upon two little neglected children, pale, miserable little objects, without decent clothes and almost dying of hunger. I inquired into their history and found they had been entirely abandoned and knew not where to go. I resolved to adopt them, placing them under the care of Our Lady and calling them in my mind *Orphans of Mary*. How to support them I did not quite see, as I had scarcely anything myself to live upon; but still I persevered. A charitable person offered me a room, rent free, where I placed them, and very soon five others came to implore the like protection. To encourage me, God sent me an excellent woman, who had been an old servant, and who offered to come and look after them. The history of these poor little ones began to be talked about in the

town. The mayor sent for me, spoke kindly of my adopted family, and proposed to give me an unoccupied house belonging to the Commune, which I gladly accepted. One person gave me one thing; another, another; and by degrees I found myself providing for no less than sixty of these little waifs and strays, who otherwise would have been in the streets.

This was my first work; but a far heavier burden was to be laid upon me. One morning, while I was saying my office, my mother, who lived with me, came and told me that a young woman who seemed very unhappy, implored to see me without delay. I went out to speak to her and found she was living a bad life, but earnestly wishing to leave it; and, with many tears, she implored me to save her. An hour later came another, and then another, and so on for several days. What could I do with them? I could not mix them with my orphans, or take them into my own house; yet to send them back to their horrible life was impossible. At first I sent them to the Good Shepherd at Toulouse, Montauban, and Montpellier; but very soon this resource failed me, all these refuges being full and the Superiors objecting to taking penitents from other dioceses. I could only pray that no more of these poor creatures would be sent to me.

That, however, did not seem to be God's will. The very next day two more girls appeared, imploring me with many tears to save them. What was to be done? I remembered that there was a disused loft adjoining the orphans' house, of the existence of which no one knew but myself. I bought a ladder for two francs

and, taking the elder of the two women who looked after the orphans into my confidence, I asked her if she would go up into the loft with these girls until I could make some other arrangement. She consented, and I conducted these poor lost sheep to their temporary refuge, saying to them: "My poor children! you have much to expiate and to atone for, so you must expect every kind of privation." They answered that they would accept and bear anything rather than go back to their old life.

It happened with the penitents as with the orphans; their number increased every day; my loft was full, and I did not know which way to turn. Then grave difficulties arose. Careful as my mother and I had been to keep the matter as quiet as possible, what I was doing oozed out. People began to gossip about it, some kindly, others the reverse; till what I had undertaken began to assume the appearance of a public scandal. They pretended that I mixed the penitents with the orphans, and some who were ill-disposed towards me brought their complaints before the Bishop, who, of course, sent for me and demanded an explanation, which I was only too happy to give him.

The Bishop was very much interested in all I said, and thoroughly approved of what I had done, but added: "We must somehow get rid of the semblance of a scandal. What do you propose?" I told him that I saw only one way, and that was to build a Refuge for my penitents, and till I could get the money, to allow them to stop where they were. I could not deny that the orphans knew of their vicinity; but some of the

penitents led such lives of penance and devotion that they were rather subjects of edification to the children than otherwise. Finally, the Bishop allowed me to go on as before, until I could find some other shelter for them. But every day the situation became more difficult and my position more critical.

I was living at that time with my old parents; my father, who had been a health officer and was very aged and deaf, still did his utmost to help others, and served God with that loving simplicity which is most pleasing to Him. My mother was a woman of earnest piety: yet she had become discouraged by the hostility of our neigbours, and one evening when we were sitting by the fire, she said to me :—

"My son, I think we must not tempt God: be satisfied with your orphans, and give up these poor women, for whom you have no longer either room or means to support them."

I was answering sadly: "Dear mother! has God ever forsaken those who trust in Him?" when we were both startled by my father's voice. We thought he was asleep in the alcove, and he seldom heard what we said. He rose up in his bed and exclaimed: "Mother, what advice is it that you are giving to your son? you are tempting him to mistrust God! My child, do not listen to her; go on with your work, and never doubt Divine Providence. God, who has given you such love for His poor, will also give you the means to realize your plans for their salvation."

Thus encouraged, I persevered, in spite of all: but it became almost impossible to feed my poor children.

The charity of my friends was exhausted: God was my only hope. One day, when I was almost in despair, I received a visit from a priest in the diocese, who was rich, and had a large house on the outskirts of the town. He offered it to me, saying that he knew and approved of my work, and wished to share in it. I thought I was saved, and accepted it with joy, throwing myself at Our Lady's feet to pour out my deep thankfulness. But that night, as I prayed again for light and guidance, I suddenly felt convinced that this house would not suit our purpose. It seemed as if the Mother of God showed me, as in a map, where I was to go, and dictated to me what I was to do. I saw, as in a vision, a country house far from the town, far from men, on the sea-shore, with nothing between God and Nature but my poor penitents.

I spent half the night in prayer, and in the morning went to my generous friend and said: "You will think me very strange: but——"

He interrupted me with a smile: "You are going to refuse the house, and you are right. I have thought it over, and feel that that part of the town will not do for your work. But what can we do? Alas! I have not got the sixty thousand francs you want."

"The Blessed Virgin will get them for me," I replied, and I was firmly convinced of it. But how? Now you must know that at Bayonne we have the habit of making lotteries for our poor after a peculiar fashion. We have four urns or baskets, in three of which we put the names of saints and some pious thoughts; and in the fourth the names of the subscribers, each per-

son drawing a ticket out of each basket. I put in to one of these lotteries: and the first ticket I drew was *Divine Providence;* the second, *Our Lady of Refuge;* the third, *St. Francis of Paul*, the founder of the "Minims"; and the fourth, my own name. "Well," I said to myself, "I understand. I must found my refuge under Our Lady's protection, with the help of Divine Providence. But what has St. Francis of Paul got to say to it? I have no particular devotion to him!" A few days later, passing by a shop, I saw a beautiful engraving of St. Francis of Paul, and one single word formed a kind of aureole round his head. This word was *Charity!* Everything became clear to me at once. St. Francis of Paul, the great Apostle of Charity, wished to warn me that my work must rest on that alone, and that he would thus become the patron of the new Refuge.

I resolved then to make a pilgrimage to Buglose, a famous sanctuary of Our Lady, there to obtain, if possible, her grace and protection. When I arrived, I knelt first at the foot of St. Vincent of Paul's famous oak-tree, imploring the intercession of that great Saint: then I went on to the church, which was a little farther off; and prayed earnestly to our Blessed Mother for her help in my grave difficulties. Then I went to look at the two other altars in the church: one was dedicated to St. Vincent of Paul—charity, always charity! the other to St. Mary Magdalene, the great penitent. Both seemed to realize what was in my thoughts and my most ardent wishes.

With tears I went back to Our Lady and implored

her to obtain the sixty thousand francs for me. It seemed again as if she revealed to me the exact kind of creation she desired: I was to establish my Refuge in a sandy plain, near the sea—to employ my penitents in agricultural work, and spade husbandry as well as in needlework; and, above all, that I was to have the house open to all, either to come or go, to stay or to leave, at all times and on all days. Liberty and light were to be the essential basis of the new foundation.

I came home full of hope and confidence, and a few days later went to see a rich family living in a large house on the road to Anglet. I could not help thinking what a desirable place this would be for my poor children, and the consequence was that I was sad and absent-minded. My host remarked it, and asked me what was the matter. I confessed what I had been thinking about. He laughed and said:—

"I know a house which would do better than mine. Come and see it: you can buy it for forty thousand francs."

"What is the use," I said sadly, "I have only scraped together ten thousand francs as yet."

"Never mind, come and look at it," he replied.

I went; and the more I saw, the greater was my despair at the idea that I could not become its possessor. It was just what I wanted! Filled with sorrow and discouragement, I was about to leave it, when I opened the door of one of the rooms, and what did I see? A large picture representing St. Mary Magdalene. I was as if transfigured, all my doubts and sadness vanished, and after a moment's recollection, I said to my com-

panion: "I will buy this house and offer thirty-eight thousand francs for it."

"Very well," he replied, "I will go to the agent and make the best bargain I can for you. When will you be ready to sign the contract?"

"To-day is Tuesday. I choose Saturday, Our Lady's day." Then my doubts returned, and I added: "Perhaps we had better say the Wednesday after?"

"All right," he answered.

I went away and no sooner was I alone than I became thoroughly ashamed of my hesitation and my want of trust. I spent two days in prayer and remorse. On the Thursday, I went to the lawyer, who was ill, and his servant refused to let me in. I persisted, and finally was admitted. "Forgive me," I exclaimed, "but you have drawn up the agreement for the purchase of that house for me. I want to sign the contract on Saturday."

The lawyer suggested that he was too ill. I assured him that he would be quite well by that day. Saturday came: by loans and gifts I had obtained the whole sum required. The papers were signed and the house was mine! The very next week I moved my poor penitents into it. I followed exactly the instructions given me by the Blessed Virgin. I never refused to admit any one, and money flowed in in the most wonderful way. How often, at the dinner-hour, there was not a scrap of bread in the house! Yet some help always came. God took pity on us over and over again, when I thought we must perish with hunger.

One day, when I had not a farthing left, one of the

tradesmen came and said that unless I would pay him five hundred francs, which were due to him, he would send me to prison. I went into the church and laid the letter before Our Lady. Two minutes after, the father of one of the families who had come to Anglet for sea-bathing, asked to see me immediately, as he was returning to Paris. "Sir," said the gentleman, "my wife made a vow that if her little girl was cured by the sea-baths, she would give five hundred francs to your Refuge. The child is well, and here are the five hundred francs." That was the way Divine Providence came constantly to our aid when all human hope seemed vain.

My original idea had been only to open a Home for my penitents, but by-and-by I discovered that I was to found a house of religious. Day after day ladies came to me, some of them among the best families in the country, asking to live under my direction, and to share in my labours with the penitents. After much prayer, and the advice of the Bishop, I resolved to yield to these pressing and reiterated entreaties, and to establish a religious order to be called "the Servants of Mary," who, in fact, formed the second part of my work.

All who lived pure and good lives may become, after their novitiate, "Servants of Mary," but the penitents themselves are ineligible, however good their conduct, or however real their repentance. Between the two Orders there is a great gulf fixed. Never had I fully understood the meaning of the sacred word *expiation* till I had watched these poor girls, although the most of them were ignorant, and of the lowest class. It

seemed as if they could never do enough to purify and regenerate themselves, and they were always imploring me to let them do more to atone for their past lives.

One evening some cowherds in the Landes came to tell me that when passing before a cabin they heard groans as of a dying man; but that having to look after their cattle, they could not stop to see what was the matter. I went at once and found a poor old man named Larrieu in the hut, very ill of fever. He had lived there for years with a few goats, subsisting mainly on their milk and the poor vegetables he could grow near his house. I sent two of our Sisters to nurse him, and when he got a little better, he begged to be moved to the Refuge. When he recovered, he still implored to remain, and asked me to take charge of his little bit of ground and of his cabin, which he placed at my disposal. I sent four or five of my strongest penitents to take possession of the place and to cultivate it. They were struck with the solitude and silence of the spot, and implored leave to remain there. I went to see them and found them profoundly impressed with the stern aspect of the nature around them, where there was literally nothing to be seen but sand, sea and sky. They begged to be allowed to keep perpetual silence. I objected at first, and stipulated that on Sundays and feast-days, at any rate, they should hold intercourse with one another. They obeyed for some weeks, and then once more entreated me to make their silence perpetual, saying that they thought this was clearly the will of God, that they thus worked better, and felt happier. I ended by yielding to their wishes.

Just about this time the old man, Larrieu, died, leaving me the whole of the little property which belonged to him. "My children," I then said to my penitents, "you are now at home. Do as you like. Strive to reclaim from the sea a little more of this sandy, sterile ground, which may help to feed the poor and the orphans. Do not forget your motto—*Charity!* Charity has saved you; try and save others by yours: it will be the best way to pay your debt towards God and men."

Then these poor women spread themselves over the sands, only asking for the necessary tools. By degrees they built a kind of straw monastery, with a chapel of the same material; but one night it took fire during a fearful tempest of thunder and lightning and rain, and the poor Bernardines (as I had called them) could only stand and see the utter destruction of their home!

Their courage, however, did not fail. The very next day they began building again. A scrap of paper alone had escaped destruction amidst the ruins: what was it? The inscription over the picture of St. Francis of Paul, which I had given to the Bernardines, with the word *Charity!* Thus encouraged, my poor children set to work, and soon a new building arose, better planned than the first. Then the Bishop came to see them, they having taken it into their heads to plead with his Guardian Angel that he might grant them the only thing they earnestly desired—which was the permission to have the Blessed Sacrament in their chapel. The Bishop went over the whole house; and when he came to the chapel he exclaimed: "How is this? You

have not got the Blessed Sacrament—the source of all life and strength!"

"Monseigneur," I replied, "they climb up on the roof of their cells, whence they can see our church and adore the Sacred Host from a distance. It is fair to add that when it rains, they are wet through."

"This must be seen to at once," replied the Bishop. "I will have Mass said here and the Blessed Sacrament reserved."

You can fancy the joy of my poor children, whose prayers had been so specially answered without any further pleading on their part.

We were thus all right with God; but not with men, that is, with the Government, which gave me a good deal of anxiety. The community of the Servants of Mary and that of the Bernardines had been canonically established; but I had not the civil authority, which is necessary in France before any work can be considered safe or permanent. All sorts of difficulties arose—my only hope was in God; my only resource, prayer. In the most marvellous way all obstacles were removed; and eight days only after my petition had reached Paris, I received the formal and complete approbation of the Government.

After having thus briefly sketched the origin and history of his work, Abbé Cestac took us outside to see the premises. First we came to a large kitchen garden, admirably cultivated, where the vegetables and fruits were equally fine. We were not surprised to hear that he had carried off all the prizes at the last horticultural

show! Then we went into a kind of courtyard, where hundreds of rabbits were running about, safely kept in by a wire fencing. Then we visited the farmyard, where there were upwards of a hundred dairy cows, some magnificent oxen of the fine Baretonne breed, pigs, poultry, etc., all of the best kind. The dairy, the laundry, the bakehouse and the carpenters and shoemakers' shops followed, all kept in the most perfect order and in a wonderful state of cleanliness. The whole was managed by the Sisters; and women alone were employed in the workshops and gardens. Then we walked across the fields, where the crops were magnificent and the pasture no less so. Everywhere we saw the Sisters, dressed in dark blue, with a straw hat over their white cornettes, digging, hoeing, mowing, or leading the carts to which the horses or oxen were harnessed. Suddenly the Angelus bell rang, and they all knelt for a few moments in prayer; after which they resumed their work.

Then the Abbé took us back to the house, and there we found that if women excelled in men's work, they were just as clever at their own. In every room a certain number of novices were working under the superintendence of the elder Sisters. Their needlework was admirable. They made every description of clothes: from ladies and babies' trousseaux to priests' vestments, altar-linen, albs, cottas, and the like. The rooms were only whitewashed, but decorated with statues, flowers, and pictures, besides illuminated scrolls on which were written different maxims, such as: *When you feel angry, be silent; when you are calmer speak.* As we came out

the Abbé pointed to the picture of St. Mary Magdalene, of which we have spoken. "There is the picture!" he exclaimed. "It has no value from an artistic point of view, but it is most dear to me, for it was the cause of my getting this house." Then we went to look at the schoolrooms, where the orphans are taught by the Sisters (who are all certificated) not only to read, write, and sum, but also every kind of industrial work. We found out besides, that these Sisters have become the Providence of the whole country-side. Wherever there is sickness or misery they are sent for; and they go at once; nursing the sick; looking after the children when their mothers are ill; tending the blind and the old; laying out and even burying the dead; looking after the vestments, cleaning the churches, and seeing to the adornments of the altars—in fact, their charity is ubiquitous, and embraces every description of sorrow and need.

But we had not yet seen the Bernardines, and so we pushed on across the hot sands, till we came within sound of the big waves breaking on the vast sea-shore. Towards the horizon was a group of pines, their dark green alone breaking the line of sand and sky. The solitude was complete. We went first into the chapel. A simple altar and some wooden benches, with a poor "Way of the Cross" and a statue of Our Lady of Dolours, were the only furniture. Then we went into the refectory. A long table was placed the whole length of the room, and on it a row of brown pots—nothing more. "To-day is Friday," said one of the Sisters, 'so they eat on their knees." Presently we saw a figure dressed in a white woollen habit, a black

cross between the shoulders, a black hood over the head, a black scapular with a white cross on it, and a white veil over the face, with only two holes for the eyes—this was a Bernardine. Her feet were bare save for a laced hempen sandal; and all were dressed exactly alike, while they diligently went on with their manual work. "Here is one of their cells," said the Sister, pushing open a door. We came into a species of cave, five or six feet square, dug in the sand and covered with thatch, going down into it by two steps. A straw mattress, stretched on wooden trestles, and covered with a woollen quilt, filled up one corner of the cell, of which the only ornament was a wooden crucifix hung above a shell containing holy water. Here they sleep winter and summer.

"Do they know one another?" we asked.

"No," replied our guide. "They work side by side in silence, and only speak to their confessor. If they want anything, they ask one of the old nuns who are always at hand to direct them. We read to them during meals."

"Are there many that can stand such a life as this?" we asked.

"Some have been here since the foundation."

"It is strange and inexplicable," we replied "without a special grace from God."

"Ah, there are very holy souls among them," answered the nun, "who go straight to Heaven. They are very happy."

Three holy souls in a special manner were permitted to be helpers of Abbé Cestac in the accomplishment of

his gigantic work. The first was his sister, Eliza Cestac who threw herself with her whole heart into his plans became Superior of the Community in 1838, and died, in 1849, being specially devoted to the orphanage. In religion she took the name of Mary Magdalene. The second, Gracieuse Bodin, called the "Black Mother," was the first spiritual child of Abbé Cestac. She devoted herself to the penitents, and has left the same holy memories of her virtues as the Venerable Mother. She was called Sister Marie Françoise de Paul.

The one named "the Good Sister" completed the holy trio: a woman neither highly educated nor trained, but who by her extraordinary aptitude and generous devotion to the work, conceived and organized the whole of the manual labours of the community. To her were due the gardens, the bakery, the poultry-yard, the dairy, and all the different trades carried on in this vast establishment, while by her admirable management the finances of the institution were placed on a solid and sure footing.

To these three heroic souls were added nine other remarkable women, who each and all contributed to the successful carrying out of Abbé Cestac's plans. The constitutions of the Order of the "Servants of Mary" were settled on December 9, 1841, and canonically approved of, eight days later.

The first vows were pronounced on the Epiphany (January 6) 1842, before Mgr. Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne. Their perpetual vows date from January 6, 1847. The legal recognition of the institute was obtained on January 14, 1852.

Humility, poverty, chastity, penance, and work; absolute trust in God and in the Blessed Virgin; no anxiety under present or future trials; no dower asked for or expected of the novices, all that is required being labour and chastity;—such are the bases of this new Order, the success of which has amazed all who know and have watched its development.

The venerable founder, the Abbé Cestac, died in 1868, in the full possession of his faculties, leaving behind him the reputation of a true saint. He was only sixty-seven years of age, having been born at Bayonne in 1801, and ordained priest in 1825 by Mgr. d'Astros. He rests now in the midst of his spiritual children, in the shadow of their chapel, invoked and blessed by them all, as they daily pray and weep over his tomb.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

"How marvellous are the ways of Divine Providence!" This was my first thought yesterday when a very holy and devoted priest, now a Bishop, told me the the following story:—

He was a priest at Birkenhead and devoted himself day and night to the care of the sick poor, and especially in the hospital. A very bad fever raged at one time there—so bad and so infectious that even the doctors shortened their visits in the wards as much as possible, and many fell victims to the disease. But the young priest never spared himself, and would remain for hours by the bedside of the typhoid patients, never taking thought for his own life if the souls of the dying could be saved.

Among the inmates of the hospital at that time, was a poor sailor who had fallen from the top of the mast, and had not only sustained internal injuries but had broken his thigh and dislocated his ankle bones, so that there seemed little hope of his recovery. He was not a Catholic, but the good priest often spoke to him a few words of kindly sympathy as he passed his bed, so that he got to know him a little. After a time the epidemic ceased, and the priest's visits to the hospital were less frequent. One day when he was leaving the Bishop's house to keep some other appointment, he went for

some unexplained reason the longest way, and by a common where there was a piece of water. He said he had not an idea what had prompted him to go in that direction, but so it was, and on a bench in front of the pond was the poor sailor. Recognizing him at once, he went up to him, and inquired how he was and what he was doing. The poor fellow replied that he was better, and had been sent out of the hospital, but found himself utterly unable to work, his ankle bones being all displaced and distorted. He added: "If you had come up five minutes later you would not have found me, for I should have gone to kingdom come! I had just made up my mind to drown myself in that pond, for I can do no work, I have no one on earth belonging to me, and have no prospect before me but life in the workhouse, and that I could not stand!"

The priest sat down on the bench beside him, and began by saying that the alternative he proposed would be only "out of the frying pan into the fire," and then gently and quietly began to instruct him. He found him entirely ignorant of religion, and scarcely believing there was a God. But won by the priest's kindness and sympathy, he owned that he had been very much struck by the conduct of the priests in the hospital, and especially by their coming at all hours of the night to dying cases, and at a moment's notice, whereas the Protestant parson seldom troubled himself to put in an appearance even in the day time; adding: "So, if there be a religion, I take it yours is the best."

After a little further conversation, the priest persuaded him to come home with him; and on telling the sailor's

sad position to a Catholic lady he knew, who was connected with a shipping business, she got the poor fellow a respectable lodging near her house, so that he could quietly follow the priest's instructions; after a time he was received into the Church. This same lady found a situation for him where standing was not necessary; and ever since he has gone on most satisfactorily, to the great joy of the good priest, who had saved him from despair and suicide. But who can doubt that the poor sailor's Angel Guardian had guided the priest's steps unwittingly to the spot where he found him—a spot which, humanly speaking, was entirely out of his way?

GERTRUDE; OR, CHRISTMAS EVE.

It was a bright, frosty, starlight night. The snow lay thick on the roofs and in the streets of the old Flemish town where the scene of our true story is laid. Yet troops of men and women and children were walking down the feebly lit streets, and all in one direction—towards the beautiful parish church, the bells of which were pealing gladly in the sharp air, as if rejoicing with the shepherds and the angels on this glorious night. For it was Christmas Eve, that holy, happy night which witnessed the birth of the Son of God as a helpless babe in the humble crib of Bethlehem.

The people of this place were good, simple, humble folk, full of faith and piety. To them the services of this night were the representation of a solemn reality, which they would not have missed for worlds. In every cottage the little Christmas tree was prepared, and real Christmas joy was felt by young and old, even by those in whom earthly sorrows had dimmed the happiness of past years. Among the latter was a young girl of seventeen or eighteen, who joined in the throng, but whose mourning dress and saddened face told of recent grief. She was alone, too, as she walked up the church

steps and threw herself on her knees by the chapel where the Infant Saviour was represented by a beautiful wax "Bambino" laid on straw in a manger, with His Mother and St. Joseph, and the ox and ass, watching by—the whole being beautifully illuminated, and adorned with fresh white flowers and palms.

This young girl had known other and brighter Christmas seasons, when father and mother had come with her to keep the feast, and loving words had been added to the Christmas wishes resounding on every side. But now she was alone—entirely alone, as far as earthly ties were concerned. For the cholera had visited their once happy home, carrying off father and mother and brother and sister, who had been laid side by side in what the Germans so beautifully call "God's Acre." They had been industrious, God-fearing people, and had been content with a little business which had flourished in their hands. But now the shop was closed, and when the debts had all been paid, and the doctor's bill, and the funeral expenses, there remained little or nothing for the poor orphan girl, who had consequently made up her mind to go out to service. The neighbours had been very kind to her at first; and the market-women would let her have something from each of their baskets, so that she might not feel the want of food. But the rent had to be paid, and the landlord was a hard man, and had given her notice to quit the premises on New Year's Day; so that she felt that very soon she would have no home—not a hole or a corner she could call her own.

She had no relations. Her father had been an only

child; her mother's family had all died before her; and so there was neither aunt, nor uncle, nor cousin who could let her share a meal, or under whose roof she could take shelter. The good old parish priest who had baptized her, and the Sisters of Charity whose favourite pupil she had been in their large day school, were all looking out for a suitable place for her; but as yet nothing had been found, and she felt with dismay that her small means were exhausted, and that she had but a shilling in her pocket left wherewith to buy her Christmas dinner. No wonder, then, that she knelt long and sadly by that Mother and Child, and implored the help of the Divine Infant in her great need.

The beautiful service went on. The *Adeste Fideles* was sung by the whole congregation, and poor little Gertrude (for that was her name) felt her heavy heart lightened as she knelt with the rest to receive the Bread of Life, and realized that there was One ever near her who knew all her sorrow, and would never forsake His child.

As she came out of the church her arm was suddenly seized by a woman whom she had known before, and whom her mother had often helped. She was a poor widow, with an only son who was in a decline. "For the love of God, give me some help!" she cried: "my boy is dying and calling for some milk, and I have not a farthing left in the house to buy him any, and they will no longer trust me at the shop." Gertrude felt in her pocket; there was her one shilling on which her food for the next day depended. But she could not resist the mother's prayer. "Take this," she said

simply—"it is all I have." Hardly realizing the meaning of her words, the woman clutched the coin, and flew to purchase the wished-for food for her child, while Gertrude went on slowly and silently to her desolate home, rejoicing in having been able to do this act of real charity, yet feeling that she must find some means to earn her dinner, even though it were Christmas Day!

In passing through a back street she met a young man with a sweet and earnest countenance, who said to her: "You are looking for a place, my child, are you not? Go to No. 7, in Weiner Street; they want just such a servant as you." So saying he turned away and left her indescribably cheered and comforted. The only thing that puzzled her was to know how he had guessed her need, for she did not remember ever having seen his face before. A kindly neighbour insisted on her sharing their Christmas feast; so that, strengthened and refreshed, she almost gaily made her way to the house in Weiner Street which had been pointed out to her by the stranger. On arriving at the door it was flung open by a woman in a violent passion, who cried out as she left the house: "I will not stop another hour here! They may get another servant or not as they choose!"

Gertrude timidly rang the bell, which was answered by a superior-looking woman, who asked her what she wanted. Gertrude replied that she had come about the place which she heard was vacant. "How very odd!" exclaimed the housekeeper, "why, the other is but just gone! However, you may as well come up

and see my mistress, although I fear you are too young." So saying, she led Gertrude upstairs and into a room where a lady sat in deep mourning, to whom she explained her errand.

The lady asked her how she had heard of her wanting a servant; and Gertrude simply related what had passed the night before. The lady thought it very strange, as only that morning she had made up her mind to dismiss the woman whom Gertrude had seen leave the house. "But I fear you would not be strong enough," she added. "There is a good bit of work to be done and you look delicate."

"O, do try me, ma'am!" exclaimed the poor girl. "I will work early and late if you will only let me come."

Touched by her earnestness, the lady questioned her and heard her whole history which greatly touched and interested her. Gertrude gave the parish priest and the Sisters of Charity as references for her character, and the lady, more and more favourably impressed by her words and manner, said she would show her what her work would be. On passing through an adjoining room they came into the library and there the first thing Gertrude saw was the full-length portrait of the young man whom she had met in the street. She stopped suddenly opposite it, with an involuntary exclamation. The lady turned round in amazement and Gertrude exclaimed: "Why, that is the gentleman I saw last night!"

"Impossible, child!" replied the lady hastily. "That is the portrait of my son who died last year."

"I cannot help it, ma'am," respectfully answered

Gertrude, "but I can never forget that face; it *is* the very same—the same eyes, the same mouth, the same kind expression, and it was *he* who told me to come here!"

The lady burst into tears, and calling her old housekeeper told her what had happened. Together they agreed to engage Gertrude at once: and on inquiry of the parish priest they heard all the story of her act of charity on the previous night: for the poor mother had realized later, how Gertrude had given her her *all*, and had told the priest, who felt no doubt that this apparition had been permitted by God to reward the unselfish generosity of the orphan girl and provide her with a safe home. Needless to say with what joy the lady took into her house one so clearly sent to her by the only son whom she so deeply mourned, and who had been throughout his short life an angel of goodness and piety.

Gertrude became the most faithful and devoted of servants, and never left her mistress till she died, nursing her to the last with the tenderest care. But every Christmas Eve the remembrance of that vision is before her and she is filled with joy and gratitude at this evident proof of God's loving care, and with greater confidence than ever in His answer to humble and heartfelt prayer.

THE STORY OF ADA.

It is strange, living as we do always in the presence of God, how little we realize the continual and remarkable operations of His Providence in our daily lives. We go here, and we go there, and we fancy we are acting without any special reason: and yet how often God has been guiding us, unconsciously, all the time, to carry out His designs on this or that soul.

A true story, which was told me by a young lady not long ago, is an exemplification of this truth. I will give it, as nearly as I can remember it, in her own words:—

About three years ago I was in London, and being anxious to see Westminster Abbey, asked an old friend of mine to accompany me. We started, but, for some reason or other, did not take the most direct road, but turned down a side street in Chelsea. Why we did this we did not then know, though it was made clear to us a little later.

As we were walking down, saw a nice-looking child of fifteen or sixteen on the other side of the road, dressed evidently in her "Sunday best" clothes, who, we found out afterwards, was going to join her school-fellows in a picnic to the Crystal Palace. She had just left the

house of her father, who was a tailor, and was looking very bright and happy as she trotted along, evidently full of the anticipated treat. All of a sudden we saw her stop, lean against the railing, and in an instant her little white frock was covered with blood from her mouth, a violent hæmorrhage having come on.

My friend, who was a hospital nurse, flew across the street and was by her side in a moment. The child could not speak, but pointed with her finger towards the house from which we had seen her come out, and where we hastened to carry her and lay her down on the floor, while I ran, by my friend's orders, to get a lump of ice from a fishmonger's close at hand, to put on her chest. The poor father and mother were both wild with anxiety and fright, and the former ran for a doctor. He came, and said the case was a grave one, and advised us to put her to bed at once, telling my friend privately that he did not think she would last through the day.

When she was a little better, though we still thought her dying, we began talking to her gently of God and Heaven. She seemed very much pleased, and when we prepared to go, she begged my friend to stay and pass the night with her, which she gladly did, while I returned to my convent. The next morning, very early, my friend came for me in a cab, to fetch me to be godmother to the child, who had earnestly entreated to be baptized into the Catholic Church. We found she had never been baptized at all, although she had often implored her mother to take her, and said that she did not like attending the Sunday School because she felt she wasn't a Christian.

On coming into the tiny room that morning, I found Ada had rallied a little, and was very bright and happy as if expecting some great joy. Presently one of the Oratory Fathers came in and began talking to her. He was very much struck at her intense anxiety to become a Catholic, and, turning to me, asked if I thought her mother would make any objection.

I went down and asked the poor woman, who replied, "Oh, no! I should be very glad indeed. I ought not to have put it off so long, for I am sure yours is the only true religion."

So all difficulties were removed. We left Ada for a short time alone with the priest, who heard her confession, and gave her a little instruction as to the meaning of the Sacrament she was about to receive. But it seemed as if she had been divinely taught, for she understood everything, and quite astonished Father S——by her answers and intelligence. Then he called us in, and the dear child was baptized and seemed extraordinarily happy afterwards, though not over-excited, and very calm and peaceful. The priest then had to leave, but said he would return in the afternoon, when she should make her first Communion. He asked me to do my best to prepare her in the meanwhile, but added, "I think she is instructed from on high, and that is the best teaching."

In the afternoon I returned with all the requisites necessary to prepare a little altar, and threw a white veil over Ada's head. She asked me to say some prayers with her in preparation, and then fell asleep for a little time, but with so lovely an expression on her face that

when the priest came in, he exclaimed, "She looks like an angel already, waiting only to go to Heaven." Presently she opened her eyes, and looking up at us, said: "I am so very happy!"

The Blessed Sacrament was then administered to her as Holy Viaticum, and she received also Extreme Unction, the poor mother kneeling by the bed and greatly touched at the child's joy, in spite of her grief. When it was all over she exclaimed: "Oh, if my child had been baptized before, she would never have had all the suffering she has gone through." She told us a great deal of her patience and sweetness, and could not forgive herself for not having sooner yielded to her earnest wishes for baptism. We consoled her by telling her she now had all that she wished, and in the best way.

Strangely enough she did not die as we expected that day, but got a little better, and the doctor advised that she should be removed to the Consumption Hospital at Brompton, thinking the treatment there would prolong her life. There was a little delay before she could be admitted, and during that time the Protestant minister came to see her; but she refused to admit him or to read his books, and he went away very much annoyed. She delighted, however, in the Catholic books we read to her, for she was too weak to read them to herself.

When she was taken to Brompton the nurses were in admiration at her sweetness and gentleness, and were always saying how good she was. The Oratory Fathers visited her regularly, and we were allowed also to go and see her, and take her grapes and fruit; but she would always give a portion first to a little girl of three

years old, who was in the bed next to hers in the ward.

She lingered on a week or two, and then I had to go back to Italy, and went to wish her good-bye. She was unusually sad that day, and when I was leaving the ward, called me back, and whispered to me: "I feel my end is very near; ask mother to take me home." The poor mother fetched her the next day which was the 30th of September. On the morning of the 3rd of October her breathing became suddenly worse; the doctor was sent for, and she was dying.

Her mother murmured, "O my child, pray for us!"

"I do," replied the child, and then, adding, "Lord Jesus, save me!" she expired before the priest could arrive.

He performed the funeral service, and did his best to console the poor mother, who was soon after received herself into the Church, as well as her other three daughters.

A white marble cross in the Brompton Cemetery, put up and paid for by the earnings of her eldest sister, marks the spot where little Ada rests. A verse from her favourite hymn was put on her memorial card, which ran as follows:—

Ah! they are more our own,
  Since now they are God's only;
Each one that has gone home,
  Has left our hearts less lonely.
He mourns not seasons fled
  Who now in Him possesses
Treasures of much-loved dead,
  In their dear Lord's caresses

So far I have given my young friend's story, which, I think, more than justifies my comments at the beginning. Had not these two good women, by sheer accident as they thought, turned up that particular street, they would never have seen the child, who would have died, perhaps, without the consolation of baptism. As it happened, not only was this little soul rescued and saved, but four others, through her intercession, have already entered the fold of Christ.

Who, then, shall think lightly of the merciful orderings of God's Providence as shown in the details of every day life? Only let us remember every morning to make an offering of ourselves for His service, and He will deign to make use of us in a thousand unexpected ways to carry out His merciful designs.

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THE FRENCH ASSOCIATIONS BILL:

ITS AUTHORS AND OBJECTS.

BY THE REV. JOHN GERARD, S.J.

It is strange indeed to find that our countrymen should view with tacit, if not expressed, approval the action taken by the party now [1901] in power in France against the religious orders, action which has resulted in inflicting upon thousands of men and women, without even the semblance of a trial, penalties that should unquestionably be reserved for convicted malefactors; which is, moreover, opposed to the most elementary conception of that liberty which we so jealously guard amongst ourselves, and in the name of which very liberty the sympathies of Englishmen are largely enlisted in favour of the republican form of government across the Channel. This approving attitude has various causes. It is no doubt in part explained by the traditional prejudices which unfortunately are still so widespread and so potent, and which make numbers of excellent people assume as a first principle that whoever assails the

Catholic Church must necessarily be in the right. There can be little question that it is likewise caused by the extremely defective character of the information supplied to us by our journals, all of which is drawn from anti-clerical and anti-Catholic sources. Readers of our newspapers can scarcely be blamed if they carry away a general impression, that—as M. Yves Guyot for example puts it,[1]—the Associations Bill is a mere measure of self-defence, forced upon republicans by the unceasing plots and machinations of Jesuits and others, which for thirty years have been so dangerous as to absorb all that attention on the part of successive Governments which ought to have been devoted to promoting the good of the country. The British public has heard nothing on the other side. None of the speeches delivered in the Chambers by opponents of the Bill have, as a rule, been so much as mentioned by our journals, nor any of the evidence adduced by these and others as to the absolute groundlessness of such charges as the above, and as to the real motives and influences under which the Bill came into existence, and underwent the various metamorphoses, which are not the least instructive features of its inconsequent career.

But, if we choose, we can obtain some interesting information on the subject from certain somewhat premature confidences communicated to a representative of the *Daily News*, by "one of the most influential members of the Dreyfus party," when the Rennes court-martial had recently given its

[1] *Daily Telegraph*, February 26, 1901.

verdict, and M. Waldeck-Rousseau had just come into power. In the issue of the paper for October 3, 1899, the said representative thus relates what passed :[1]

"So the Dreyfus matter is over?" I inquired. "Over!" he said, with astonishment, bounding from his chair. "Good heavens! Do you think we have waged all this campaign . . . to go no further than that? . . . The rehabilitation of the Captain, which we intend to gain, is only an incident. . . . The strife is for far more than that, and has objects which reach far beyond. We are decided to go on with it to the end, and we will win the game, too, because we are the stronger, the more intelligent, and the richer party; because we possess an absolute solidarity, and have maintained it and shall maintain it, all through this colossal struggle, *which we have undertaken because we intend to be the masters, and we shall be.* . . . We shall employ all the resources of our wonderful organization to carry on the war between the liberty of education and the religious sects. *We shall take away the right of educating the masses from the priests and the religious bodies,* in fact, we will continue the work of the Revolution. . . . *We will take from the religious bodies the riches of which they have been so long the possessors,* and, as I say, once for all the rule of militarism." "And the present Government?" I asked. "The actual Government! That is entirely on our side. *We have chosen it. We have made it.* Just wait a little; not very long, I assure you, and you will see the dance resumed."

Two days later (October 5, 1899) a leading article in the same paper reported, on the authority of the Paris *Soir,* the first whisper of the campaign about to be undertaken against unauthorized associations.

In what form the proposed legislation first saw the light, and how it was by successive emendations transformed, till it was weeded of all provisions which could touch bodies in which those were interested who claimed the administration for their

[1] Here and elsewhere the italics are mine.

creature, and till, all pretence of political and economic principle being abandoned, the new law was frankly levelled against those associations only which take the form of Catholic religious congregations—all this is an interesting study which will claim our attention later on. At present we may confine ourselves to an inquiry as to the objects with which this weapon was forged, and the nature of the alleged abuses which it was intended to remove.

Upon this subject highly instructive information is furnished in the speeches of various opponents of the measure delivered in one or other of the French Chambers, of which, despite their ability and importance, nothing has been heard in our newspapers, and amongst which may be specified those of M. Lamarzelle in the Senate (June 11, 19, and 21, 1901), of the Comte de Mun (January 21, 1901), M. Jacques Piou (March 14, 1901), and, very particularly, of M. Prache (March 19 and 20), in the Chamber of Deputies.

The last-named speaker, devoting himself specially to the dark and puzzling subject of Freemasonry, insisted chiefly upon two points. In the first place, he observed, whilst the Government has declared it necessary to adopt new and stringent precautions against the dangers which may spring from associations having moral and political influence, by far the most active and influential of such bodies, in the political field, is not only to be left untouched by the new law, but is actually to be freed from the restrictions upon its actions which previous legislation had created. Secondly, we learn from

evidence, the authenticity of which cannot be called in question, that the principles of this body in France, at the present day—whatever they may have been in the past or may be elsewhere—are distinctly and deliberately Jacobin and irreligious, and are directed to the overthrow alike of all established institutions and of all belief of any kind in anything beyond the world of sense. A third point, of supreme significance, was added by the members of the Left and Extreme Left, forming the majority, by whose aid, not to say at whose command, M. Waldeck-Rousseau was able to carry his measure ; for as the several articles of the Masonic Creed were recited from the tribune, they made these their own by the applause with which they greeted them—applause the more enthusiastic in proportion as the doctrine in question was sweeping and thorough. I shall give in parentheses, in what follows, the information furnished by the official report as to the manner in which the various items were received when thus exhibited before the Chambers.

But in the first place M. Prache, in speaking of the documents upon which he relies, conveys a remarkable piece of information,[1] as follows :

In 1897, the Grand Orient Lodge made known its moral and political principles, which it lays down in a document destined for publicity. Naturally, this is prepared with extremest circumspection : defect or excess are veiled in vague phraseology :

[1] I quote throughout, in the case of all speakers, from the editions of their speeches published, separately for each, by the *Comité général de Défense des Libertés d'Association et d'Enseignement*, 76, Rue des Saints-Pères, Paris.

but they stand plainly out in the secret documents reserved for the brethren.

M. Maurice Berteaux (*a member of the Left*). But they are printed all the same.

M. Prache. They *are* printed: but you forget to deposit them, and you find governments complaisant enough to tolerate your not doing what the law requires. (*Outcries on the Left.*) This is a point which I shall prove, and it will be for you to explain how you come to enjoy a privilege exclusively your own, *in spite of the protests of the director of the National Library.* (*Interruption on the Left.*)

It was from these esoteric sources that the speaker quoted such information as the following concerning the objects avowed by French Masons amongst themselves.

In the Masonic Convention of 1897, M. Hubbard spoke thus:

The republican spirit is inseparable from free-thought, which it is your duty to propagate, for without it the Republic will be, not a noble association of independent consciences, judging every question for themselves, but a herd of subjects, blind, submissive, and docile, beneath the holy-water brush of the priest instead of the sceptre of the monarch. (*Applause on the Left.*) Our great family unhesitatingly requires that the agents of public authority shall obey no other moral authority whatever but that of the Republic. (*Fresh applause.*)

On a similar occasion in November, 1899, and consequently after M. Waldeck-Rousseau's advent to power, the same speaker declared:

Positive philosophy unites all men of good faith. *The present Ministers are all positivists,* which is the reason that they can all agree on certain points, though of various shades of opinion. If Freemasonry is and remains positivist it will be mistress. We must refashion the mental attitude of the nation. (*Très bien! très bien! on the Left.*)

Similarly in a Masonic Congress at Paris in 1900, M. Marcel Huart thus delivered himself :

We must entirely recast our [educational] programme, and must in particular tear out that shameful page whereon a divine morality is still prescribed to the schoolmasters of France, whose task it is to teach our budding democrats the A B C of universal democracy. (*Bravo !*)

Still more solemnly, the official orator of the same assembly thus spoke in its name :

Well, my brethren, a new soul must be breathed into the nation : and it is our task to do the work ; it is their task who have the charge of governing the Republic. We are men of tolerance, of course. We have proved that before and we will prove it constantly again. But in the case of legitimate defence special rights are created : and in presence of a social peril, sentimentalities must give place to the necessities of action. (*Applause.*) Dogma is an instrument of domination and conquest : let us fight against dogma. And the first blow to deal, that which it will feel most, is to stop the supplies. Those who want worship should pay for it. (*Applause.*) As for those who, while their faith keeps its hold, have not the means of treating themselves to such a luxury, it will not be long before they renounce it, and learn very philosophically to do without it, hearing their priests say to them—"No money, no Mass." The congregations are in conspiracy and form centres of resistance. Let the congregations be dissolved and expelled. (*Loud applause on the Left.*)

As for education—of all kinds—it should remain, while waiting for something better, the sole monopoly of the secular State. (*Très bien ! très bien !*) State employments, without exception, whether military or civil, ought to be reserved exclusively for the officials and soldiers, who shall give proof not only that they have made their studies, primary, secondary, or higher in secular institutions (*Applause on the Left*), but that their children are in like case. Then will unity be established in the aspirations of our country and peace of mind. (*Très bien ! très bien !*) Then will republicans come to their own again, as they did after the *Seize-mai* and after Boulangism. (*Applause on the Left.*)

In view of such declarations of policy M. Prache thus continued :

There then is the philosophic system of Freemasonry. Its hostility is not for dogma alone, but for the teachings of reason as well—for the idea of God Himself. For tolerance it cares nothing. It desires the moral unity of the country, and to produce the moral unity these are the doctrines it would impose. Republicans of the past placed the principle of toleration far above all their own particular aspirations and interests. They believed that every man should be free to think for himself, and they declared war in the name of liberty of conscience against religious organizations which ventured to burden other men's consciences by calling in the aid of the civil power. It is *you* who nowadays render yourselves guilty of "clericalism." The really clerical Church is that of the *Rue Cadet.* [1]

Again, in another part of his speech, Mr. Prache said :

Liberty of philosophic speculation is perfectly lawful, and I do not in this tribune contend against Freemason associations because of their ideas. What I will not admit, what I am attacking, is their claim to impose those ideas upon us by law. I have shown you from two documents issued by the Lodges that the end pursued by Freemasonry is to impose this doctrine upon our officials and to make it the basis of our scholastic legislation. According to the Freemasons, a republican should of necessity be a free-thinker. This is what orators entitled to speak in the name of Freemasonry have explicitly declared. As far back as 1882 a brother who was a professor in the faculty of literature at Douay proclaimed this principle : "The distinction between Catholicism and Clericalism is purely official, devised for the needs of the tribune : but here, in a Lodge, let us speak out the truth : Catholicism and Clericalism are one and the same." (*Applause on the Extreme Left.*)

I am delighted at your applause, gentlemen, for the country will now be assured of the sense and scope of the

[1] Where are situated the headquarters of the Grand Orient Lodge.

formulas you use in addressing it. It will know exactly what you mean when you speak of republicans and republican principles ; and will thus be able to make its choice between liberal and sectarian republicans, between true liberty and Jacobin despotism. (*Applause on the Right and in the Centre. Ironical cries on the Extreme Left.*) The declaration of the Douay professor winds up thus : "A man cannot be both a Catholic and a republican." There is the genuine doctrine of radicals and socialists.

That such a sketch of the creed which it is sought to impose upon all Frenchmen is by no means exaggerated or unfair is abundantly clear from testimonies similarly adduced by M. Lamarzelle before the Senate. Thus in 1896 M. Combes, then Minister of Public Instruction, speaking at Beauvais, said :

At an epoch when all ancient beliefs, all more or less absurd, and all erroneous, are tending to disappear, it is in the Lodges that the principles of true morality find an asylum.

Of what nature are these principles we learn from the manifesto of which we have already heard as issued by the "Grand Orient."

Masonry [declares the document] seeks the origin of the ideas of duty, right and wrong, and justice, neither in pretended divine revelation, nor in philosophical ideas.

And a distinguished member of the same body, M. Fernand Faure, thus developed the thesis, December 5, 1885 :

I see no necessity of farther insisting before you that we should seek to banish that religious influence which is called clerical. As to clericalism, no manner of doubt or difference of opinion can be entertained. But I go further : I say we

must eliminate all the philosophical ideas, or to say better, all the beliefs, which not being grounded upon science, upon the observation of facts, and free reason alone, elude verification or discussion. Such beliefs are in truth a disease of the human mind.

And M. de Lanessan, now a member of the Government and Minister of Marine, summed all up, on occasion of the Solstitial Feast of a Lodge in 1880, in words which I prefer to leave in the original :

Car nous devons écraser l'infame ; et l'infame, ce n'est pas le clericalisme, c'est Dieu !

The programme to this effect was thus officially set forth in 1894 by M. Bourceret, Reporter of the Propagandist Committee of the Grand Orient :

We will rapidly sketch what should be the main lines of masonic propaganda. We would have its action cover the whole ground, and prepare the emancipation of consciences by combating the futile teachings of the Churches and their influence. Let us labour to ruin clericalism and gradually to sap the spirit of religion. Let us remind those who seem to forget, that the separation of Church and State is our constant aim. And for this end, by the way, let us preach by our example, ourselves in our own families keeping our consciences aloof from Church influences, putting our principles in practice, and shutting out of our houses the priests, whom we desire to expel from civil society. (*Applause on the Left.*)

In 1885 another speaker had laid it down as a principle :

There must be no half-measures. Men must be against the Church or against us.

And the expression "the Church" is, as we have seen, to be understood in the largest possible sense. Thus one of the masonic lecturers, M. Pasquier, in 1899 addressed the Lodge called "Les droits de l'homme":

> In taking for the subject of my lecture the crimes of the Church, it is not my intention to assail Catholicism alone, but religions of every kind (*Très bien! très bien!*), the spirit of religion itself. Our part should be more extensive, and should issue in the total suppression of religion and clericalism of every description. (*Très bien! très bien!*)

Such, then, are the ideas by which France is to be regenerated, and accordingly it is laid down as a sacred duty for the body whose utterances we are considering to co-operate in the diffusion of these ideas, which is to be effected chiefly in two ways —by securing the election of their votaries to Parliament, and, as we have already heard, by instilling them into the minds of youth in the process of education. To secure success in the electoral campaign, as M. Prache pointed out in the Chamber, the general body of the electorate not being as yet sufficiently enlightened, and being likely to be repelled by a plain statement of the programme, in the carrying out whereof they are to be induced to bear a hand, the representatives of the Lodges are to practise a prudent system of mental reservation, and to keep in the background those subjects, dearest to their own hearts, which might let the people know too much. Thus, as he tells us:

> The Lodges spread their doctrine by means of the press, by organizing lectures, and by distributing pamphlets. The

organization of the lectures is very remarkable : the Lodges apply to the Grand Orient for a lecturer, who is frequently a counsellor of the Order, or one of the numerous orators whom it is accustomed to send on the mission. . . .

M. Chauvin (interrupting). There are no missionaries amongst us. Freemasonry never uses that term.

M. Prache. I beg your pardon : these are the words used by the Grand Orient, and I am sorry, M. Chauvin, that you, who are one of the lecturers in question, should be unacquainted with this. The lecturers, as a rule at least, present themselves, not as being appointed or delegated by the Lodges, not as Freemasons, but as socialists or radicals. A lecture is arranged ; the hearers do not suppose it is a Freemason to whom they are listening, and at the Congress of Eastern Lodges held at Lyons in 1896 we learned the reason why.

Lecturers [it was said], when they present themselves as Freemasons, are the object of attacks which must be avoided. We should, therefore, never disclose ourselves, but establish and support the measures we favour in an occult manner. We must not give to the multitude the impression that we are as intolerant a sect, and as much possessed by the spirit of domination, as are our enemies. Our best safeguard and real strength is masonic secrecy carefully preserved. In fine, the masses need an ideal, and if we can provide them with one better than they have at present, it is the part of wisdom to abstain from exhibiting ourselves as a kind of religion.

So, likewise, Parliamentary candidates were required, in a Masonic Convention of the year 1897, to deposit with their several Lodges a written declaration of faith, in which they pledged themselves to support all anti-clerical, socialist, and labour-*versus*-capital legislation, but the publication of this creed, in such form as it could reach the electors, was not required, the reason being that urged by one of the speakers, M. Jullien :

With such a programme not a single Republican candidate could show his face throughout the country. It is imperatively necessary to present ourselves only as supporters of the ideas which are held by the majority of Republican electors.

It is, however, the education of youth that is recognized as all-important, and towards the obtaining of absolute control over this every effort is to be directed. Here, too, it is not difficult to discern the root idea of those who framed the Associations Bill. As the Comte de Mun asked the hostile majority in the Chamber of Deputies:

> Whence comes it, gentlemen, that being no longer able to apply to these religious antiquated laws which have fallen into desuetude, having no fault or offence to charge them with, you yet continue this outrage, and introduce to the country as a law on behalf of liberty what for some you intend to make an instrument of proscription? When you have done talking about mortmain and economic dangers, you have but one reason to give—that which is at the bottom of this whole discussion: namely, that amongst these religious congregations, amongst these citizens, there are some who, availing themselves of the right common to all, undertake the office of educating youth, and find many families in France who are ready to entrust them with their children. Yes—there it is!
>
> There is the true and only motive of your endeavours. Mortmain, the milliard [to be wrung from the congregations], the abdication of natural rights [involved in religious vows],—these are but the stage-tricks, I had almost said the tom-fooleries, whereby bumpkins are wont to be inveigled in and kept wonder-stricken to see the piece played out. Behind such clamour and clap-trap one can descry the claim everlastingly made by the Jacobins, to govern men's ideas, to impose their own doctrines, and to lord it over the consciences of others. This is the claim which the President of the Council [M. Waldeck-Rousseau] calmly uttered, as though they were the simplest of political truisms, when at Toulouse he denounced the idea of two bodies of youths, separated less by their position than by their education;—which bodies a few days afterwards M. Viviani contrasted as being brought up the one under the shadow of dogma, the other amid the illumination of science.

As might naturally be expected, masonic orators have, amongst the initiated, been very urgent upon this subject.

In the Convention of Eastern Lodges, in 1892, M. Beauquier thus drew a picture of the state of things to be brought about:

As I said just now, and I come back to the point because I deem it essential, we must have with us within our temple all educators and instructors of youth. We shall never see the Republic set on a lasting basis until there shall be found in every village a Freemason schoolmaster, a secularist parish priest, who can be set against the other parish priest, and can profitably combat his pernicious influence. We shall never see the Republic definitely established until every child trained by such a teacher shall have in his hands no Catechism but that of the Rights of Man, and of the Citizen (*Applause on the Left*), when the communion-rails shall be deserted, when the money-boxes shall be empty, and the Curé, to keep himself from starving, shall be obliged to consume the stock of wafers into which, under the name of hosts, he professes to make Christ descend. (*Cheers and laughter on the Left.*)

So noble and exalted is this object to be held as to take precedence of all other considerations. Not only is liberty to be of small account when it is question of establishing a republic in accordance with such ideas, but a principle is to be adopted without scruple, which when falsely attributed to others is stigmatized as the essence of all wickedness—the principle that the end justifies the means. It was thus that in 1891 one of its members exhorted the Grand Orient to adopt what is known as the *Vœu Pochon et Cocula*, of which more anon.

The proposal is contrary to absolute liberty: but we, Freemasons, are we Liberty's devotees? No, we are members of a sect, but members of a sect which places above all else the safety of the Republic. Whatever are the means that we may employ for the salvation of the Republic, we account them good. (*Très bien! très bien! on the Extreme Left.*)

As to the *Vœu Pochon et Cocula* itself—which we have heard acknowledged to be "contrary to absolute liberty," its exposition before the Chamber elicited some remarkably frank avowals. Here is the report :

M. Prache. The *Vœu* runs as follows :
"In future no one shall be capable of any public function in the gift of the State who has not pursued the studies preparatory to that function in the schools affiliated to the University. Diplomas, warrants, and certificates shall be granted only to such candidates as during the three years preceding the examinations were students in a State school, departmental or communal." (*Très bien ! très bien ! on the Extreme Left.*)
M. Jules-Louis Breton. That does not go far enough, but, however . . .
M. Clovis Hugues. Sound doctrine that !
M. Prache. The *Vœu* is not forgotten, it has been renewed every year in the Lodges and Conventions of the Grand Orient.

The teachings so zealously propagated have spread, and now find devoted disciples amongst all sorts and conditions of men, but especially amongst those whom their effects promise to benefit. The following passage-at-arms in the Senate is instructive :

M. Lamarzelle. We all know what has now become of tolerance (*neutralité*). You have heard in the Chamber these words of M. Baudin, Minister of Public Works, who on occasion of the inauguration of the Upper Primary School at Nantua, November 12, 1899, said that it was the duty of teachers to prepare for the future, by weaning the young minds confided to their care from the prejudices which have become traditional. You have also been told of the teachers' banquet, December 8, 1900, presided over by M. Leygues, Minister of Public Instruction, whose subordinates thus addressed him through one of their number : "To teach in school is not our only work, or care, or duty. We have to act always and everywhere. We are in the midst of each commune as representatives of civil and secular society, the

propagandists in some degree of the secularist idea (*l'idée laïque*)."

Here is something else: the circular of a Society which styles itself the Federation of Secular Youth, and gives to its circular all possible publicity. I read as follows—"To all such as, reared in the falsehood of dogmas and the servitude of an exploded discipline, have had the courage to shake off this yoke and emancipate their conscience—to secularist teachers and all schoolmasters who will substitute for an insincere and demoralizing tolerance the fruitful vigour of a teaching thoroughly impregnated with Republican free-thought . . ."

(Let us hear no more of tolerance.)

M. Victor Leydet. "*Très bien!*"

M. Lamarzelle. Well said, is it not! You are quite right to cry, "*Très bien,*" and I am happy to record this mark of approbation as coming from you: but you must not be surprised if I presently draw therefrom certain conclusions. Send your own children if you will to these free-thinking schools, but let us have schools to which we can send ours—schools in which are taught the doctrines that are dear to us, not doctrines which we abhor.

The circular I have quoted is signed by the President, M. Lapicgne, *maitre de conférences* in the Sorbonne, and by M. Pérez, of the higher Normal School: and to give it greater authority it bears the heading, "Federation of Secular Youth: Honorary Presidents, MM. F. Buisson, Professor of the Sorbonne, and A. Delpech, a Senator."

Of the auxiliaries thus recruited by the Lodges the most notable were the Ministers who, by the Bill which they have succeeded in carrying, have given so large an amount of practical effort to the desired reforms. We have already heard it boasted by a member of the extreme party, that the Ministry of M. Waldeck-Rousseau is bound to fall in with the ideas of those to whom it owes its existence and the history of the measure in question, scarcely comprehensible without some such key, exactly corresponds with this account of the state of things behind the scenes.

When first introduced to public notice, the pro-

posed law was to be all which it now is not. It was to be no piece of exceptional legislation by which some alone were touched, but was to be built upon principles affecting all citizens alike. It was on no account to interfere with liberty of teaching. So said, in Parliament, the President of the Committee charged with the examination of the Bill, the Minister of Public Instruction, and the Premier, M. Waldeck-Rousseau himself. As the latter assured the Chamber:

> When we come to discuss Article 14 of the Bill, I shall make it clear that the proposed enactments have absolutely no bearing upon legislation concerning teaching, and until such legislation shall have been modified, it remains in force, as a matter of course, and the law before us does not even touch it.

Yet the same Minister, in a speech at Toulouse, sounded a very different note:

> If we attach so great importance to the Association Law, it is because it carries with it, at least in great part, the solution of the problem regarding teaching.

There is no doubt as to which of these utterances is the more straightforward. The first belongs to the phase of the enterprise when it was sought to do one thing while professedly intent upon another; the second, to the ultimate stage when it was found necessary to call things by their names.

At first it was thought sufficient to declare that no association could be tolerated the motive of which was contrary to justice and to law; and then it was to be argued that inasmuch as the vows of religion

constitute a self-suppression or abnegation which no man has a right to undertake, the congregations of which they are an essential feature are intrinsically bad and unlawful. But such an objection, as was speedily urged, must touch all congregations alike wherein such vows are taken ; no authorization by a Government can affect the nature of things ; and the bodies Ministers desire to retain must be branded as radically evil no less than those that they wish to be driven out.

Community life was next chosen as the rock of offence ; a clause being inserted which disallowed "all associations the members of which dwell in common." But here arose at once a difficulty still more formidable. The custom, originally established in Belgium, has been introduced in France and is there gaining ground, of young, unmarried workmen banding together in bodies numbering from a score to a hundred and upwards, to maintain establishments where they can live more comfortably and economically than in lodgings. These were evidently threatened by a proposed clause, and accordingly the newspapers indignantly asked whether it is not the right of citizens to suit their own tastes as to such conditions of life—and the clause made haste to disappear.

Another device was tried. Restriction was to be confined to associations between Frenchmen and foreigners, or associations of Frenchmen having their headquarters or official centre abroad. Here, it was evidently thought, had been found a solid basis, and M. Waldeck-Rousseau insisted that good order and national security were alike seriously

involved. Yet this so important provision vanished from the law even more unceremoniously than the others. Besides religious congregations, there is also the Socialist International, to which the above description obviously applies, and its adherents were not disposed to submit to the proposed treatment. "You shall not," said M. Groussier, amongst others; "you shall not, under pretext of fighting the congregations, try to fight us at the same time. We will not stand it." Wherefore the Government, pocketing the affront, and oblivious of good order and national peril, dropped the offensive paragraphs.

Thus it came about that, as M. Piou told his colleagues in the Chamber:

> The Committee has abandoned the circumlocutions devised by it in co-operation with the Government in order to strike at the religious congregations without mentioning them. At the last moment it has realized that life in common is not a sufficient cause of proscription, and that engagements taken to one's own soul, under the sanction of conscience alone, are not unlawful objects of traffic. Wherefore, weary of looking for roundabout approaches, it has ended by going straight for its goal, and decided to call its victims by their name.

Straight for their goal the extremist party have accordingly gone, and have proscribed the objects of their antipathy without troubling themselves to discover a rational or judicial basis upon which to ground the proscription. They have been challenged over and over to produce evidence that the congregations have taken any active part in politics, but, says M. Lamarzelle, "with the sole exception of the Assumptionists in respect of their newspaper *La Croix*, in spite of all inquisitions,

investigations, and seizures, they have discovered just nothing at all." They have been similarly challenged in regard of education, and with a like result. As the Comte de Mun put it to M. Waldeck-Rousseau :

> Do you remember, Mr. President of the Council, a sitting when we were in Committee on the subject of education, when M. Jacques Piou asked you, apropos of the scholastic qualifications [to be required of candidates for office], whether you could quote any facts which demonstrate that those brought up in free schools, when they became functionaries of the State, have served it ill? There was silence; all waited for your reply, which might be final. You answered that you had no facts to quote, but that you were quite convinced of it. This is exactly the style as reported to us of one of the orators of the 18th Fructidor. "Proofs! Against royalists there is no need of proofs: I have my convictions." But I beg to differ, Mr. President of the Council; there *is* need of proofs. When you denounce before the nation a whole class of young people; when you propose to expel them from all public employment; when you accuse their masters of corrupting them, you have to prove what you say. For fifty years have these masters been teaching: what a number there should be of those they have corrupted to exhibit!

There have certainly been vague declamations and sweeping assertions in plenty, but of facts to justify the course adopted there have been none. Yet it has naturally been desired to disguise the real character of the monstrous tyranny thus exercised upon no other principle than that those should take who have the power, and those should keep who can, and assiduous efforts have accordingly been made to disclaim all idea of persecution or hostility towards religion. Nothing was farther from his intentions, protested M. Waldeck-Rousseau himself, than to meddle with any man's faith; he claimed no sort of right to do so. Nor did he assail the Church,

he rather interfered on behalf of its genuine representatives, the secular clergy, against the malign influence of the congregations which is deleterious to Catholicism itself.

But all the same, as the Comte de Mun told his victorious adversaries, it was fear of Catholicism and of Christianity that was at the bottom of the whole movement.

> That which so alarms you to-day [he said], is that face to face with the body of socialist youth growing up in your *lycées*, there is arising a body of Christian youth, more and more numerous every day. For there is the point, as you know well, there is the great fact of our epoch, which is sufficient to show the folly of your enterprises. For five-and-twenty years you have wielded power without a rival; you have had public instruction in your hands; you have distributed employment and favours; you have had the disposal of money grants. And after a quarter of a century of uninterrupted domination, with no serious opposition, you discover on a sudden—and this is the motive of your proposals—that the middle class is slipping from you, that your very officials—your solicitude and your hope—claim for their children the liberty of Christian education.

And that this is no more than the truth, in spite of all the disclaimers uttered by Ministers, they and the world are bluntly told by the leaders of those imperious allies, by whose aid alone have they obtained power or can retain it, and who, as the price of their assistance, claim the right of making the Government dance to any tune for which they choose to call. Thus does M. Viviani, the foremost and most outspoken orator of the Extreme Left, sweep away the professions of M. Waldeck-Rousseau.[1]

[1] Speech of January 15, 1901. Paris, *Imprimerie Modèle.*

I would ask the Government, in view of the everlasting, logical, and natural alliance between the Catholic Church and the congregations, what course we are going to adopt, and wherefore we assail the congregations if we maintain an attitude of tolerance towards the Church. The Government may well ask itself, before it sets to work, whether the said alliance be lasting or temporary. Is the cohesion of the Church and the congregations the cohesion of a day? Is it at the mercy of a political move, of a dexterous negotiation, of a change of government, or even a change of *régime?* On the contrary, by force alike of tradition and of logic, on account of the essentially international character of the Catholic faith, has not the Church come to be linked so closely with the congregations that for the Catholic body in general they are what are flesh and blood in our natural bodies. But if this be so, if this bond be ever-enduring as history and logic guarantee, what is our attitude to be? I fancy we shall not long be engaged with these liberal subterfuges which weary out our patience by declaring that there is any difference between sincere Catholics and Clericals.

We must take charge of education, and make it plain that we cannot always be the victims of words and phrases, that to be sure, liberty of education would be a good thing if it were possible, but that between the practical monopoly, created by the Church and the legitimate monopoly created by civil society and reverting to the State, there can be no hesitation.

But assure yourselves, even when you have done all this, you will have solved but a part of the problem. As I have asked you before, do you imagine that this law brings us to our last word or last battle? Why, it is but a skirmish, in comparison with the combats of the past and the future. In truth, as M. de Mun has well said, here meet in conflict the society founded on the will of man and that founded on the will of God. (*Très bien! très bien!*) The question is, what position are we going to take in this battle, and are we going to be satisfied with an Associations law? Well—it must be said, and I will say it, hard as my words may seem—the congregations and the Church threaten you, not alone because of their external action, but because they propagate faith.

And another prominent member of the same party, M. Jules Guesde, declared, in words cited in the tribune of the Chamber :

"The question at issue is one between us and the capitalistic society (*la société capitaliste*). That society rests upon the executive Government, the Army, and the Church. Of the Government and the Army we can easily dispose. The real power we have to assault is the Church."

Such, unmistakably, are the origins of the Associations Bill, which, while represented by its advocates as necessary for the perfect union of minds and hearts, cannot fail to awaken amongst Frenchmen the most bitter and enduring animosities. As M. Lamarzelle said, apostrophizing the Premier :

It is a war of ideals, and that is the reason why it is a war against the Church, for the ideals of the congregations are those of the Church. What you attack in combating them are the dogmas of faith, it is the faith of Catholics itself. Against this assertion, M. President of the Council, you have protested with the utmost energy, affirming that it is not your wish to declare war on the Church. Well, allow me to tell you, notwithstanding the indisputable authority attaching to your person which your great ability has acquired, that your personal wishes count for little in this matter. What is of real moment is the will of those who are with you, who are at your back, of those who have helped you to take this first step—for in their eyes it is but a first step—of those whose strength you have much enhanced by making use of them, and who will leave you behind when you no longer help them.

Therefore, whether you will or no, you have set in motion the anti-Catholic host, and in spite of all your talent, and your singular dexterity, you have not the power of saying to it, "Thus far shall you go and no further." It is a religious war which you have enkindled in the land.

Is it not a most extraordinary phenomenon, to come back to the point from which we started,

that enactments founded on such principles as these should meet with any toleration from the public opinion of Englishmen? Stranger still that they should be welcomed and belauded by that section of the press which distinctively describes itself as "religious," and yet finds a fresh ground of denunciation against the exiles flocking to our shores, in the fact that they are banished by those who make no secret of their intention to banish Christianity.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

One Penny Each

The Jesuit Oath
The Secret Instructions of Jesuits

CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION

AND

THE PERILS THAT NOW THREATEN IT

A Lecture by the Most Rev. P. J. Ryan, Archbishop of Philadelphia [1]

I propose to speak to you on the subject of "Christian Civilization and the Perils that now Threaten it." I have selected the subject because I deem it a very important one at the present time. My object is to show that our civilization is the result of the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, and is now imperilled by the neo-paganism and infidelity of this age, and that it is the sacred duty of every man to see to its preservation.

The term civilization is a very general and somewhat vague one, and various definitions and descriptions of it have been given. I think, with Edmund Burke, that the essence of civilization consists in the spirit of a gentleman and in the spirit of religion, that is, the union of all that is noble and sacred in religion with all that is gentle and strong in our humanity. Emerson says: "The truest test of civilization is not the census, nor the size of cities, nor the crops, but the kind of a man a country turns out." Our highest conception of a perfect man is the union of religion and gentle manhood, realized in the person of Christ, the Founder of Christian civilization. Christianity is Christ continued, and its civilization is His continued influence on the outside world. I think the best test of the civilization

[1] Originally issued by the C.T.S. of San Francisco, and reprinted with their permission.

of an individual, or of a nation, is unselfishness, and the best test of unselfishness is care for the poor and oppressed of our race. Mr. Lecky complains of this age as defective in the spirit of self-sacrifice. Its defect is in proportion to its forgetfulness of the teachings and spirit of Christianity, which is pre-eminently the religion of self-sacrifice.

This spirit of self-sacrifice is essential to the continued existence of civilized society. Each man must pay a little of personal comfort to the general fund of society. Selfishness led to the fall of pagan civilization and threatens our own. Carlyle says "that men of learning and profound reflection begin to doubt whether it is possible for the existing framework of civil society to hold together without the principle of cohesion, supplied by the truths which it has cast away."

Fortunately, only a portion of society has been rash enough to reject them; and, as Christianity is immortal, like its Founder, that rejection can never become universal. It is, however, the duty of Christians to keep it within as narrow limits as possible.

To do this intelligently and effectually, we have to fully appreciate the connection between Christianity and the civilization to which it has given name. To see that this civilization is based on, and motived by, great Christian doctrines, which, if weakened or denied, will weaken or ruin the great superstructure itself, and send us back no merely to pagan civilization, but much farther. For you will observe, even Paganism taught great conservative truths, such as the existence of the Supreme Being and His Providence over men, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, which modern unbelief affects to deny. It may be some time before the dangers which we apprehend will fully develop themselves. The flower that is plucked from its stem retains its fragrance for a time afterwards. The morality and public conscience which Christianity has produced will influence men for a time also, after they shall have ceased to believe, but this influence must be necessarily temporary. The restraint which Paganism placed on human passion being removed, and God ignored, self will becomes the worshipped Deity. To avert this, let

us first examine the connection between Christianity and its civilization.

Christianity is a fact in the history of the human race, the most mysterious in its nature, the most stupendous and universal in its effects; a fact which philosophy cannot ignore, nor infidelity deny, nor scepticism doubt; which has influenced religion, arts, arms, sciences, literature, social life, politics, human happiness, human suffering, human progress, more than any other fact in the history of our race. The unbeliever who regards it lightly, as one of the many false religions embraced by man at various periods of his history, who thinks that its influences were simply and exclusively confined to the secret intercourse between the Creator and the creature, such a one can never adequately understand the philosophy of human history. Christianity re-fashioned the whole being of man, politically and socially, as well as religiously. It formed not only the Christian saint, but the Christian statesman, the Christian warrior, the Christian citizen, the Christian artist, the Christian soldier, and the Christian philanthropist.

"Christianity," says Mr. Gladstone in his *Studies of Homer*, speaking of it from the third century upwards, "has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of human civilization, and has driven, harnessed to its chariot as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world. Its learning has been the learning of the world, its art the art of the world, its genius the genius of the world, its greatness, glory, grandeur, and majesty have been almost, though not absolutely, all that in these respects the world has had to boast of." But in no sphere did it effect so signal a revolution as in the formation of Christian philanthropy. To understand this fully we have but to view the poor, helpless, and suffering under pagan and Christian civilization, to behold the spirit of Christ passing along the wayside of human history, bending, good Samaritan-like, over the wounded and robbed sufferers of our race under Paganism, and not only pouring into their wounds the strengthening oil and wine, but also bearing the sufferers to the inn—that is, founding institutions for their permanent cure and comfort, and promising that

when the Lord shall return in the end, He shall pay whatever is over and above to the caretakers of wounded humanity.

To see the condition of the unfortunate under Pagan civilization, we need not take examples from the rude, untaught children of the forest, who are called the barbarians of antiquity; but look to the polished, educated, highly cultured nations of Greece and Rome. It is the fashion of a class of modern humanitarian political philosophers who have some influence in this age and country to praise classic antiquity, to exhibit its virtues, as proofs of what unaided man can do, to practically ignore the civilization of Christianity, and to hold forth the pagan nations as magnificent models for the emulation of our own young Republic. God forbid that we should ever adopt these models. If we do, our moral corruption will, like theirs, increase with our material greatness, and a false civilization, with a terrible power for evil, will, like the strong man of Scripture, soon twine its mighty arms around the great pillars that support the national edifice, shake them to their foundations, and be destroyed only in the crumbling ruins of the edifice itself. I am far from denying to these classic nations of antiquity many glorious natural qualities. Their learning, military prowess, exalted patriotism, their cultivation of the arts, and their spirit of material progress, are unquestioned and unquestionable. But for their morality, for their care of the poor and the suffering, for disinterested sacrifice for others, we look almost in vain until the rising Orient of the Christian day, the "Light of Light," appeared above the troubled waters of Paganism and illumined the dark passage of this valley of tears.

Aristotle tells us that it was a common practice in his day for parents to expose their children to death. This was no secret crime for which there was punishment as now, but it was a public, recognized, legalized act. One of the laws of Lycurgus commanded that all children born with any deformity should be immediately put to death. He claimed the children as the property of the State, and treated them as such. Infanticide was not uncommon in Greece. In Rome the fourth of the twelve "Tables of the

Law" enacted that the father should have the right of life, death, and sale of his child, and it also decreed that the deformed ones should be put to death. The result of these laws was that the parents kept as many of their children as they pleased, sold or killed the others, treated them as men do newly-born whelps. In some instances, as Lactantius and Minutius Felix tell us, they cast forth their children, who were devoured by dogs. You shudder at this; why? Were not these men and women with human hearts like our own, not barbarian men and women, but graceful Greeks and cultured Romans? You shudder because the civilization of Christianity has softened your hearts and protects you from the barbarism of these nations. Tacitus tells us that the Romans smiled at the scruples of the Jews for holding the doctrine that infanticide was a crime. We find men like Solon and Quintilian defending child-murder, when the children became inconveniently numerous.

Behold, then, the appalling spectacle! Helpless infancy exposed, killed, cast to the dogs. See the yellow Tiber, as it sweeps by the marble palaces, by the temples and luxuriant baths of ancient Rome, bearing upon its waters the floating bodies of pure, innocent, holy childhood! Such was the state of the world, when a voice was heard from obscure Palestine. It was but the feeble cry of a child, but it was to reverberate in thunder-tones through the universe, and to awaken and purify the echoes of the seven-hilled city. It was the cry of infancy from the stable of Bethlehem. It was the deep, solemn protest of the Child-God against the barbarism of infanticide. It was the proclamation of the young King, that infancy was now sanctified and should be reverenced, that divinity itself had descended from on high, and appeared in the vesture of infantine humanity. "A Child is born to us, and a Son is given to us, and the government is upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace." Behold Him afterwards in that sweet scene of His public life, when the children clustered around Him, and the disciples would keep them at a distance, and when

He restrained these disciples, saying, "Suffer the little children to come to Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." When protecting the virtue of little children from scandalizers He seems for the time to lose His sublime habitual calm. He pardons the greatest sinners with gentle pity; He cries out from the cross to His Heavenly Father for mercy on those who mock and crucify Him. But when He speaks of those who by word or deed injure the soul of only one of His little ones, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world" becomes "the Lion of the fold of Judah," the benediction becomes a malediction, and the scandalizer of childhood, like the barren fig-tree, falls beneath His withering curse: "Woe to the man that shall scandalize one of these little ones: it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged around his neck and he should be drowned in the depths of the sea." Again, He says: "See that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father who is in heaven."

Sublime dignity of these little ones! God's angels are their angels also, appointed to shield them, and only wait the Divine permission to strike down the scandalizers and persecutors of their charge. Therefore "despise them not," defend, cherish, embrace them. Great has always been the care of the Christian Church for holy childhood. For centuries she had to fight alone for these little ones of Christ. Child-murder was so common that it required her entire power to abolish it. Even as late as the years 546 and 589 of the Christian era we find her, in the Councils of Lerida and Toledo, enacting penalties against child-murder. We see this care through all the ages of history in the numerous lying-in hospitals, orphan asylums, and protectories, established by her in all the countries of her extensive domain. But behold a picture that will vividly show you the value Christianity sets upon childhood! It is a cold winter's morning, but a few hours after midnight, in the deserted, snow-covered streets of the great city of Paris; the gay revellers of last night are asleep; but see the form that stalks around the by-streets,

lanes, and alleys like a spirit of ill-omen ; see that woman shivering with the cold, and her soul shivering with a moral chill of the terrible, unnatural crime she is about to perpetrate. She gazes around to be certain that no one sees her, nor thinks that the withering glance of our Common Parent is upon her. Nervously she draws from beneath her shawl the concealed offspring of her sin. She looks at its face for the last moment with the glare of a maniac, for with all her crimes she is a mother. She leaves it in the snow to perish, and flies to hide her face from every human eye. The child weeps, and soon the chill of death will stop its young heart's pulsations. Is there no hand near to lift it up, no breast that will press this young heart to it to continue life, until the waters of the regeneration shall sanctify it? Behold that tottering old man of seventy winters. Time has laid its hand upon his head, and frozen his hair into gray. He is out this early to seek poor outcasts like this. He takes the child in his arms, lifts his eyes to heaven, thanks God, and thinks of the Infant in Bethlehem, on that cold December night, when "there was no room for Him in the inn." He is the priest of Christianity, the true philanthropist, the great-hearted Vincent de Paul. He takes the child home to his Sisters of Charity, in whose virginal bosoms throb mothers' hearts. Thus what Christ commenced, Christianity perpetuates. The child is the image of God, undimmed by sin. Its soul is of priceless value, no matter how deformed its body, or how impure the blood that courses through its veins. Its body came from its parents, but that soul came out from the Heaven of God, and is destined to return to its portals, and to adore God with His angels and its angels, "who always see His face." From this great truth springs a principle of Christian civilization, which must ever protect childhood. Let unbelief deny it, and let men act out this unbelief, and we shall in time return to the barbarism of pagan civilization ; as great principles act themselves out into great institutions, so it is true that he who would strike down the principle must also crush the institution and rob childhood of its loving protectors.

From the consideration of childhood under pagan and

Christian civilization we come naturally to consider the condition of woman under like influences. Before the advent of Christianity woman was, in most countries, little more than the white slave of man, who had dominion over her property, and in some places over her life. The degradation which polygamy stamped on her was everywhere felt. It was sometimes simultaneous polygamy, when a man kept several wives at once, and sometimes it was the no less criminal, but more comfortable and convenient, successive polygamy of divorce.

Seneca laments the fact of almost daily divorce in Rome in her most cultured period. Juvenal, who lashed the vices and vicious of his day, tells us of one woman who by divorce married eight husbands in five months! Even the "divine" Plato, the most "naturally Christian" of the pagan philosophers, advocated a community of wives, and on the ground that the children would then become more exclusively the property of the State. Hymen, the god of marriage, was represented in Roman mythology as the son of Venus, the goddess of impurity, by Bacchus, the god of drunkenness. How degraded was woman, whom God made far purer than man! Such was the world when in the stable of Bethlehem, the birthplace of civilization, stood a woman. Her arms formed the throne of the newborn King who proclaimed the new civilization. The blood with which He paid the ransom of redemption had come from her alone. Filled with the Spirit of God, she, representing as it were the whole sex, cried out in her sublime *Magnificat*, "He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaid: from henceforth all nations shall call me blessed, for He that is mighty hath done great things for me, and holy is His name."

Woman was exalted in the person of the Mother of Christ. Therefore it was, as it were, the triumphant *Magnificat* canticle of liberated womanhood! The Christian Church abolished at once simultaneous and successive polygamy, and thus preserved the dignity and freedom of woman. Should she ever become degraded again, it will be by the modern Paganism that ignores Christianity. Already perils surround her. For nineteen

centuries Christianity, organized in the Catholic Church, has contended for the indissolubility of the marriage tie, which is woman's only hope of retaining the position which she now possesses. Unfortunately, this doctrine has been disregarded, and divorce, with the permission to marry again, is drifting us back to successive pagan polygamy. The twentieth century will feel and see and acknowledge the wisdom of the old Church, in repressing, rather than partially indulging human passion, by sweeping away the very possibility of marriage after divorce. The world will yet do justice to Christian Rome as the only power to save her from pagan Rome, and will address her with the author of *Childe Harold*:

> Parent of our religion, whom the wide
> Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven,
> Europe, repentant of her parricide,
> Shall yet redeem thee, and all backward driven,
> Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

And not only over woman, noble and virtuous, but also over her fallen sisters, who are popularly supposed to be like fallen angels, destined never to rise again, has Christianity spread the ægis of her protection, and inspired hope of reformation. Under pagan civilization this unhappy class of women was simply ignored, and their case deemed hopeless. Of all the beings on this earth who drink the bitter waters of human misery, the most truly wretched is that outcast woman who has lost virtue, and has come to know and to feel her supreme solitude and wretchedness, whom the world in its coldheartedness or pharisaical prudery deems it pollution even to mention, who, crushed by sin and sorrow and all social proscription, wanders in the world like a moral leper, parentless, friendless, homeless; whose heart is a wild waste, without tree, or fruit, or flower, or one gleam of joyous sunshine; whose hopes, like fallen leaves, are withered for ever, and who wishes to sink like these leaves into the earth and be forgotten. Only Christian charity could reach her; fallen as she is, she is a glorious subject of that charity. Fallen as she is, yet remember there was a time when that young heart beat high and joyous to a pure and holy love. There was a time

when a mother's kiss was imprinted as a signet upon her yet unprofaned lips, when the eyes now closed in sorrow, and scorching under her warm tears, laughed out the ingenuousness of her simple heart. There was a time, but it is gone—gone for ever; then why enumerate? The world that allured and fascinated and ruined her, now flings her from its bosom like a scorpion, or smiles contemptuously at her misery, looks upon her as Satan looked upon Eve after he had wrought her fall.

Such was the fallen woman under Paganism and stern Judaism, when one of her class, with singular apparent audacity which was really supernatural courage, entered the banquet hall of Simon, and, unterrified by the presence of indignant Scribes and self-righteous Pharisees, fell weeping and broken-hearted at the feet of the Founder of Christian civilization. It was her only resting place on God's earth. She washes these feet with her tears, and wipes them with her dishevelled hair. She kisses these feet in reverential love, for they are beautiful. Yes, Mary, "beautiful are the feet of Him on the mountains," high above the low prejudices of men: of Him "who evangelizes good things, evangelizes peace" to thy broken spirit, which, like thy broken alabaster box, sends upwards to Him the odour of sweetness. Mocking Pharisees understand it not and are scandalized. "If this man were a prophet," they whispered to each other, "He would have known what manner of woman this is that touches Him, that she is a sinner." But see, the Lord repels her not. She looks not into the heaven of His face, for well she knows that like the heaven beyond the stars, "nothing defiled should enter there." She speaks not, but only weeps. He who esteems most the heart eloquence of such penitent tears, hears and blesses and forgives her! He defends her apparent boldness before the assembled guests. And how faithful this "sinner of the city" afterwards proved! When Scribes and Pharisees sought His death, when Judas betrayed, and Peter denied, and even John followed but at a distance, she ever remained the same devoted penitential lover.

She was found on Calvary at her old place at His feet,

His bleeding feet; she threw her arm around the bloody rood as He hung expiring upon it. She knew Him in the Garden of the Resurrection when He pronounced her name and awoke the memories of Simon's banquet hall. She fell again at His feet, and exclaimed "Rabboni, Master!" And now in Heaven she still clings to her old place, at Jesus' feet—the part "that shall not be taken from her for ever"—and prays for her poor outcast sisters—the sinners of the cities of the world. She became a factor in the great work of Christian civilization. From the time of Magdalen, the fallen penitent women became favourite objects of Christian charity, and institutions for their reformation have sprung up in every portion of the Christian world. Quite a number of these poor penitents desire to remain all their lives under the protection of the Sisters, and a religious order called that of the "Magdalens," with vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, has been instituted for them. Of the penitents who leave, the greater number persevere in virtue and get happily married. Of those who relapse into sin, quite a number return again to the house, as the vivid impressions made on them during their former residence there almost invariably revive. Amongst the penitents, especially in Europe, are found highly educated women, and it has sometimes occurred that the pure virginal Sister of the Good Shepherd receives as a penitent one whom she knew in the world as a dear friend. We can well imagine such a scene! The Sister attempting to throw her arms around her, and the penitent recoiling from her and exclaiming, "Oh don't, it will kill me! Angels should not touch demons such as I have been." And then behold the Sister leading her to the convent chapel and leaving her before the tabernacle—Magdalen at the feet of Jesus!

Passing to another class of the unfortunate sufferers of our race, let us consider the condition of prisoners, even those of war, usually supposed to be privileged. Let us consider them under the most refined and cultured pagan civilization. Look at that scene of a Roman triumph. See the kings and generals who are taken prisoners of war whilst defending their own countries. Behold them

led along in melancholy, insulting procession, in chains of gold, silver, or iron, according to their rank, but all bearing the badge of slavery. Jesters are employed to mock at them in their misfortune. No wonder the curse of Rome is burning on their lips and in their hearts, whilst the crowded thoroughfares and peopled housetops peal forth insulting curses on their heads. Worse than this they force these prisoners to become slaves and gladiators, and to butcher each other for the amusement of their highly civilized Roman conquerors. Brother had to encounter brother in the bloody arena, and when two strong, brave men met in fight and could not vanquish each other, the populace cried out impatiently for others to enter the arena. They were thirsty for blood, and should have it. The wounded gladiator might plead piteously for life, but was laughed to scorn. More than this—but how shall I tell it? Pliny and Tertullian, the pagan and the Christian, both inform us that it sometimes happened that when the fresh warm tide of the gladiator's blood gushed out, it was received in drinking cups, handed round to the audience and sipped by Roman men and—Roman women! Great God! how terrible can human nature become, even highly cultured human nature! Man is truly the vilest, as well as the grandest of God's creatures, an angel at once and a demon.

Thus was Paganism treating its prisoners when there stood in the hall of Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea, a prisoner. He stood there as a malefactor who was to strike off the fetters of the captive, and make the character of the prisoner sacred and inviolate. He identified Himself with the prisoners of all time. He made kindness to prisoners the condition of eternal salvation—"I was in prison and you visited Me"; as if He said, I will live in every heart-broken captive until the end of time. His spirit has ever animated that Christianity which He founded. The Roman prisons were deep, dark dungeons, into which one ray of Heaven's white light could never enter. By decrees of the Christian Roman Emperors, especially those of Theodosius, the condition of prisons and prisoners was mercifully ameliorated. Christians visited them, according to the command of our Lord. The Chris-

tian Church perpetuated this charity. In the Twentieth Canon of the Council of Orleans, in 549, and in the Great Council of Chalcedon, in 431, it was ordered that prisoners should be most kindly treated, visited and consoled by the faithful, according, says the Council of Chalcedon, "to the traditions of the Fathers," showing that it ever had been the teaching and practice of the Christian Church.

You know how the dreadful gladiatorial combats were finally abolished. Men continued them in spite of the Church's protests, when a monk of the distant Thebaid heard of the terrible excesses. A light flashed on his soul, like inspirations on the souls of the prophets. He left the desert and journeyed on to Rome. Though no longer young, his spirit was young and fearless, and he bounded into the midst of the Coliseum whilst the gladiators were fighting, and commanded them in the name of God to desist. Eighty thousand people filled the mighty building and looked in wonder at the audacious stranger. He appealed to them and to the Emperor, in the name of Christ, to stop this terrible combat. The appeal was not heeded. The populace demanded the blood of the intruder, and he was stoned to death. But this scene ended the gladiatorial combats. They never revived after it, and the monk is honoured now as St. Telemachus, truly a hero of Christian civilization!

Time and suffering quenched not the fire of zeal in the old Church. On the contrary we behold her in the time of the Crusades establishing that wonderful Order for the "Redemption of Captives," the members of which bound themselves by vows, not only to collect money to redeem the Christian prisoners retained by the Turks, but to actually go, as they not unfrequently did, to exchange places with the prisoners, in order that men of family could return to their homes to support their wives and children! Behold them, offering their hands for the prison chains of the Mussulman, and their bodies to the lashes of their taskmakers, for they thought of One on whose sacred flesh fell the scourges of the Roman soldiers in order to liberate the prisoners of sin.

What was true of individual prisoners was true also of oppressed nationalities. The Church, which is Christians

organized, was ever of the people and with the people. When the Normans invaded England, the Norman prelates, who came over with the invaders, stood between the oppressed Saxons and their own countrymen, and defended with great self-sacrifice the conquered nationality. Who was it that here on the soil of this New World protected the primitive people from the savage excesses of their Spanish masters? Who but the Church's clergy, represented by such men as Las Casas, the Dominican, the Franciscan Fathers and the secular clergy, who became the champions of the oppressed races. Bound to them by ties stronger than those of kin and nationality, they defied the wrath of royal and military powers. In Arthur Helps's *Spanish Conquest of America* (vol. ii. pp. 46, 66) we read :—

"The King's preachers and Las Casas formed a junta of their own. They admitted one or two other religiosos into it, a brother, it was said, of the Queen of Scotland being one of them."

The conclusion this junta came to was, that they were obliged by the Divine Law to undertake to procure a remedy for the evils of the Indies ; and they bound themselves to each other by oath that none of them were to be dismayed or to desist from the undertaking till it should be accomplished. They resolved to begin by "the evangelical form of fraternal correction." First, they would go and admonish the Council of the Indies ; if this had no effect, they would then admonish the chancellor ; if he were obdurate, they would admonish Monsieur Chievres ; and, if none of these admonitions addressed to the officers of the crown were of any avail, they would finally go to the king and admonish him. If all these earthly powers turned a deaf ear to fraternal admonitions, they, the brethren, would then preach publicly against all of these great men, not omitting to give his due share of blame to the king himself. This resolution, drawn up in writing, they subscribed to ; and they swore upon the Cross and the Gospels to carry out their resolve.

Robertson in his *History of America* (vol. iv. p. 8) says : "The priests were the ministers of peace among the Indians, and continually exerted themselves to remove the rod of

iron from the hand of their oppressors. Any mitigation of their hardships was due to the mediation of the priests. Ecclesiastics both regular and secular were regarded by the Indians as their natural protectors. In every case of violence or exaction, they had recourse to them."

So has it been also in our day with the North American Indians. Missionaries like Father De Smet and his companions have done more to civilize the Indians by the influence of the doctrine and institutions of the Christian religion than all other influences united. That remarkable man thoroughly studied and deeply loved these primitive tribes. I remember once having incautiously asked him how he could have lived so long and so happily amongst these savages. "Savages!" exclaimed the old man. "The only savages I have met in this country I have met in New York and St. Louis, where I have stayed. The civilized savages who have received and rejected Christianity truly deserve that name." General Harney, then the oldest officer, I believe, in the American army, told me that Mr. Lincoln, during his Presidency, sent for him to consult on the subject of sending troops to subdue some troublesome Indians. "If you wish my opinion, Mr. President," said the General, "it is, that you send not troops, but Father De Smet and myself on a peaceful campaign." The influence of the old missionary was marvellous, and the peaceful campaign effected more than could have done several regiments of soldiers.

What was true of the Saxons and the Indians, I need not say was true also of the relations existing between the Catholic clergy and the Irish people. They were found together in penal persecution and famine sufferings, and, thank God, they stand together as one man in these trying times! Christianity civilized and sanctified that island. A civilization far above that of material progress has signalized her—a civilization which nerved her to sacrifice the things of this world for her honour and her God. Cold should be the heart of the priest who would not love and defend her!

The action of the Christian Church in relation to the abolition of slavery is so well known that it needs but a

passing reminder. That action commenced in the first century and has continued until the present day. In the first century a Catholic Christian lady named Callista, passing through the slave market of Smyrna, was attracted by the gentle and intelligent looks of a young slave, and redeemed him. He was afterwards instructed in the Christian faith by St. John the Evangelist himself, and subsequently became Bishop of Smyrna and the celebrated martyr St. Polycarp. Callista's action foreshadowed the action of the Church in future ages. We find the Church gradually preparing slaves for the enjoyment of liberty, and then seeking their emancipation; civilizing at once and sanctifying them. St. Patrick had been a slave in Ireland, and we find him writing to Coroticus, a Welsh noble, begging him to liberate his Irish slaves.

The doctrines of Christianity, especially those of the origin of man, the doctrine of the Incarnation, and of the destiny of the immortal soul tended to bring up the individual, no matter who he was, to the plane of equality with other men. How ennobling is that doctrine of the immortality of the soul, now questioned by unbelievers! How different the destiny to sink into the earth like the beast of the field and be forgotten forever, from that described in the destiny of the last child of Adam that shall stand on this earth amid the wreck of creation and in view of the dying sun, and destined to survive it and live forever! Such was the destiny of lowliest slaves. Again he was of the nature which had been united to Divinity in the Incarnation, and thus became a brother of the Son of God. You know how Popes and Councils protested and emancipated such men during all the centuries of the Church's existence.

In regard to the great contest between Labour and Capital in our day which seems sometimes to threaten a universal revolution, where shall we find a power strong and impartial enough to reconcile them? Behold Labour and Capital like the gladiators in the Roman amphitheatre. Labour stares at Capital and says: "What are you but a man, like myself? Why oppress and crush me,

that you may live in luxury? It shall not be!" And Capital, in its pride, replies: "I am not as you. Men never were and never can be equal. You must submit to my dictation or starve!"

So the contest must continue, but behold the great delivery! Christian civilization, like the monk from the Eastern desert, bounds into the arena, and Christ Himself stands between the combatants. He alone can reconcile them. He represents Supreme Capital, for He is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," and all the riches of heaven and earth are His. But He is also Labour, for He is the Carpenter of Nazareth and so poor that He had not where to lay His head. Behold both united in Him. Taking the hands of the combatants He presses them between His own and gives to both His benediction. He admonishes Capital that it is but God's steward, and accountable to Him for its use of riches, and consoles Labour by His own example and the promise of everlasting riches. In the teaching of the Founder of Christianity and of His Church, will be found the only power to reconcile Labour and Capital, as so admirably set forth in the Encyclical letters of the present Vicar of Jesus Christ.

With regard to the poor, we know that pagan civilization practically ignored them, except, perhaps, to regard their poverty as almost a crime. Even Plato would have them expelled from his model Republic if they became too numerous for the comfort of their more fortunate fellow-citizens. We know that in the city of Rome, when she had three millions of people within her bounds, and worshipped at the shrines of thirty thousand gods, she had no asylum for her poor. She had her gods of eloquence, of war, her goddesses of wisdom and of love, but no god or goddess of blessed charity, no god of the poor. This title was reserved for the true God alone, for "who is like unto our God, who dwelleth on high, and beholdeth the humble things in heaven and on earth, lifting from the earth the weak, and from the dunghill the poor, that He might place them with the princes of His people."

Wealth, then, under pagan civilization, despised

poverty, when, lo! a mighty revolution takes place—takes place at the birthplace of Christ, at the cradle of the new civilization. Behold wealth, royal wealth, at the very feet of poverty, adoring it! See these kings of the East, with their gold, frankincense and myrrh, prostrate before poverty, in whose garb Deity itself is invested! And when that Child grew to manhood, He commenced His first sermon, the great Sermon on the Mount, with a benediction on poverty: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He practised during life the poverty which He blessed. He lived as the carpenter's son of Nazareth. And during His public career, though showering blessings temporal as well as spiritual on men, making the blind to see, and the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk, and cleansing the lepers, and raising the dead, yet, "He had not where to lay His head." He died naked on the cross, in supreme poverty.

From that moment poverty was not only not a disgrace, but a benediction, for, "whom God foreknew He predestined to be made conformable to the image of His Son" and that is the image of perfect poverty. From the infancy of Christianity, institutions for the poor were placed under the special protection of the Christian Church. The appointment of deacons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, was specially for the care of this class, and St. Paul tells us that when the other Apostles sent Barnabas and himself to preach the Gospel, they charged them "to take care of the poor, which thing," says the Apostle, "we were careful to do." In the time of the first Christian Emperor, Constantine, the State gave over the care of the poor to their best protectors and friends, the Christian clergy, and, in every age since, we see the priest and the poor associated.

This care of Christians for the poor was shown most strikingly in their devoted self-sacrifice towards the sick poor, especially in regard to lepers and sufferers in times of plague. According to the stern behest of the Mosaic Law, the lepers were compelled to live apart from the people, but when the Mosaic dispensation passed away,

the fervent early Christians established lazarettos or hospitals, for the care of the poor lepers, and daily waited upon them when the rest of the world—even their own relatives—had abandoned them. This spirit lived in the brave Father Damien, dying of leprosy, but fearless and even joyous at the very portals of death. Other priests, as well as Sisters, continue his work. During the terrible yellow fever visitation in Memphis some years ago, five Sisters called on me in St. Louis to receive my episcopal blessing before going down to that city of death. I asked them if they fully understood the danger of the situation there. They replied that they had done so, and had earnestly begged of their Superior for the privilege of going, as people were dying there utterly abandoned for lack of nurses to attend them. "But people who go there now," I urged, "often die within ten days." "Ten days!" replied a bright, happy-looking Sister; "why we can do so much good in ten days, and there is no one else to do it." As they descended the steps from my hall-door they seemed to me as going in procession to their early grave. Four of them descended into their graves within as many weeks. A noble young Episcopal clergyman, whom I knew well, went down to the plague-stricken city about the same time, and when it was urged that people going from without into that city were more liable to be affected by the plague than those who continually lived there, he replied, in almost the words of the Catholic Sisters, "One can do so much good, even in a single week. I will go in the name of God." He acted there not only as a spiritual adviser, but as nurse for the sick, and acted from the purest supernatural motives, and died in the midst of his work. He had the happiness on his death bed to be received into the Catholic Church by one of the Dominican Fathers. Nine Catholic priests fell victims of charity there.

But the most striking evidence, perhaps, of Christian civilization in this regard is found in an incident that occurred in Alexandria in the third century, and which forms a suggestive contrast to the pagan civilization of the time. In that great city the Christians formed the poorest

portions of the community, and were persecuted by their pagan brethren. A plague broke out among the citizens and more than decimated them. Comparatively few of the Christians became infected by it, probably because of their more temperate lives. The infection was so appalling that the nearest relatives abandoned the dying or cast them into the streets and left them unburied. Now came the time for Christian revenge. Out from the Christian quarters of the city issued the men whom these plague-stricken people had persecuted. The army of charity advanced on them: they waited on their dying enemies, nursed them, and when they died bore them to their graves, and in many instances lay down beside these graves to die victims of forgiving charity—heroes of true Christian civilization. Alexandria became afterwards one of the greatest centres of Christianity.

I might continue to multiply these evidences of self-sacrifice amongst Christians, but I think enough has been told to convince you of the real blessings to humanity conferred by the civilization of Christianity. To what I have said two objections may arise in the minds of some of my hearers—the first that I have been unfair to paganism and pagans, and the second that I have been so absorbed in what the Catholic Church has done for civilization that I have almost ignored the works of Protestant benevolence. To the first I reply that I think I have shown that the crimes and cruelties of Paganism arose from its very principles, whereas those of Christianity would arise from ignoring or defying its moral teachings; in the language of the convert and orator, Lactantius, the Christian Cicero, "It is easy to see that the worshippers of false gods could not be good or upright men. For how could they be expected to keep from shedding human blood who worshipped gods that shed blood, as did Mars and Bellona? How could they spare even their own parents, who adored Jupiter who drove away his own father? How could they be merciful to their own infant children who venerated Saturn, the devourer of his children? How could purity have any value in the eyes of those who paid divine honours to an adulteress, who had been nothing more than the common

victim of the lusts of all the gods? How could rapine and fraud be avoided by men who knew the thefts committed by their god Mercury? He, moreover, taught them that cheating was not fraud, but smartness. How could they restrain their passions who venerated Jove, Hercules, Bacchus, and Apollo as gods, while their lusts and frightful lasciviousness, of very blackest dye, were not only known to the learned, but brought out upon the stage of theatres, and made the choice material of songs, that every one might the more surely know them? Could men, however good naturally, be good under such training? Or be upright, while taught injustice by the gods? To appease the god you adore, you must do the things you know to be pleasing and agreeable to him. The most devout worshippers are those who seek to imitate their god, and thus truly did the worship of the gods destroy the morals of the heathens."

If many pagans were good and noble—and unquestionably they were—it was because of the natural goodness of their hearts, which were better than their religion, and also because of the truths of natural religion, such as the existence of God, the future rewards and punishments, which, though mingled with some false doctrines, produced many admirable results.

Another objection may be urged to what I have said—namely, that I have alluded chiefly to the action of the Catholic Church, as if there was no Christian civilization amongst those outside of its pale, or as if they, too, had not made great sacrifices in its cause. God forbid that I should deny to human nature, even without Christianity, much that is noble and benevolent. God forbid that I should deny to Protestants, either individually or organized, the possession of great and self-sacrificing benevolence.

In the last three centuries Protestants have done noble work in the cause of benevolence, and have done it from high motives of Christian charity. But look at the fifteen centuries that preceded the "Reformation," especially at the times of transition from Pagan to Christian civilisation. Who was it that bore the brunt of the persecution of ancient Paganism? Who was it that fought the battle in defence

of helpless childhood, and feeble women, and suffering prisoners? Who was the monk that faced the gladiators in the Coliseum, and by his death abolished gladiatorial contests? And who now makes most sacrifice for suffering humanity? But let us hear one who cannot be suspected of any partiality to the Catholic Church. Speaking of the effects of the discipline of that Church on civil society and especially in relation to the poor and to the oppressed, Mr. Lecky, in his *History of Rationalism in Europe* (vol. ii. p. 37), says: "By consolidating the heterogeneous and anarchical elements that succeeded the downfall of the Roman Empire; by infusing into Christendom the conception of a bond of unity that is superior to the divisions of nationhood, and of a moral tie which is superior to force; by softening slavery into serfdom and preparing the way for the ultimate emancipation of labour, Catholicism laid the very foundation of modern civilization. Herself the most admirable of all organizations, there were formed beneath her influence a vast network of organizations—political, municipal, and social—which supplied a large proportion of the materials of almost every modern structure." In another page the same author says: "That Church, which often seemed so haughty and overbearing in its dealings with kings and nobles, never failed to listen to the poor and to the oppressed, and for many centuries their protection was the foremost of all the objects of its policy."

As a confirmation of what I have said, that it is the spirit of Christianity which has so ameliorated the condition of suffering humanity, let us observe the countries of the world which have remained unconverted, and those also, the nations that tried to un-Christianize themselves. Take as a specimen of the first class the vast empire of China; and of the second, France, in the delirium days of her anti-Christian Revolution. It is certain that the Chinese ought to be, humanly speaking, amongst the most civilized people on the earth. They are, perhaps, the most universally educated, at least to the extent of what we call a common school education. Almost every man in China can read and write, and the country has a fair share of higher education. The Chinese are exceedingly industrious, hard-working,

shrewd business men. They have everything tending to civilize them, except Christianity, and because of this defect they remain comparatively uncivilized. Childhood is degraded, as in the times of pagan civilization. Children are publicly exposed for sale, and purchased in the market-places. Woman is still, as of old, the slave of man, whilst prisoners and the poor are almost in the condition which I have described in the pre-Christian times. Again, look at France, once so gloriously Christian, in the full noontide of her un-Christian days. She sought in the mad paroxysm of the Revolution to cast aside her Christian doctrines and traditions, and with them lost her Christian civilization. She abolished the Sabbath, desecrated the sanctuary, shattered the tabernacles, broke the statues of Christ and His saints, and flung off the Christian yoke. By one wild, desperate spring she plunged into the chasm of worse than Paganism. Christianity, with folded arms, looked on from a distance to see how France could live without her. Deeds of blood, fearful as those of Roman story, characterized the new regime. The mere humanitarian theories of infidel philosophy could never elevate her. When tried, they melted in the sunshine like the waxen pinions of the Athenian artist. France sank into the wildest barbarism in the Reign of Terror. This is a lesson to posterity of the essential connection of Christianity and true civilization. But here I may be confronted by some young orator of progress, who would say to me, "I acknowledge that Christianity did great things in its day, but that day has passed. It helped humanity in its infancy to rise and walk, but now it needs no such assistance. The Church must conform herself to the new and advanced state of things, or be pulverized beneath the chariot wheels of progress. We freely admire and adopt all that is beautiful in the morality of Christianity, we admire the Sermon on the Mount and its Preacher. We take its morality, but we care little for its doctrines, for these doctrines only lead to differences of opinion and sectarianism."

One of the most fatal and demoralizing superstitions of this country, is this attempted separation of morality from doctrinal teaching. Doctrines are as the granite founda-

tion to the whole edifice of Christian ethics, and with them that edifice must stand or crumble into ruins. What underlies the value of holy childhood but the doctrine that the child has an immortal soul? Aholish this, look at the child only in the light of its utility to the State, and soon infanticide will commence again, and deformed children will be put to death when men shall have lost the tenderness which Christianity has produced and fostered. Most men admire the Church's action in regard to divorce. They believe that her conservatism in this respect is essential to the preservation of the family and the sanctity of human love. But all her action and her sufferings in maintaining this principle are founded on a doctrine that marriage is indissoluble, and because of this doctrine the Pope himself and all the Bishops of the world united with him cannot grant a single divorce. Look at the great motives of human action. Behold that young man contending with fearful temptation, wrestling with some "mid-day demon." The pleasure promised is certain and alluring. Religion whispers in his ear, "Fear God, listen to your conscience, you know that to yield is wrong. Remember the punishment which God has threatened, remember the heaven you renounce if you yield, and the hell whose punishment you will deserve." Now all this warning is based on doctrines. Only whisper in his ear, "There is no hell, God is indulgent, or takes no cognizance of human action." Strike down the great truth and you strike down the great motive. Again, look at the marvellous institutions of charity throughout the world, Sisterhoods and Brotherhoods such as I have already described. These people have sworn that in poverty, chastity and obedience they shall wait upon sufferers whom they never saw before, and with whom in many cases they can have little human sympathy. How account for this phenomenon? Not by fanaticism, which is short-lived and uncertain, whereas these sacrifices have lasted nineteen hundred years. No, there is but one solution; all this work of charity is built on a single doctrine that Christ has identified Himself with the poor and the outcast, and that in attending to them we aid Him. The fevered brow is the brow crowned with thorns, the

prisoner in the jail is the captive of Pontius Pilate, the man dying on the scaffold, the crucified sufferer of Calvary. Thus Christ is loved and tended in His representatives. Deny this single doctrine and you rob the sick, the poor, the prisoner, and the dying of their consolers, and civilization of one of its most glorious triumphs.

Look, again, at the influence of doctrinal teaching in the hour of affliction. Look at that poor, broken-hearted wretch who feels that the world has rejected him. Why should he live? Why should he endure "the stings and arrows of this outrageous fortune"? There is nothing left to live for, and suicide seems his only relief. Then Christian faith descends like the comforting Angel of Gethsemane and whispers to him, "There is One beyond the stars who takes cognizance of every sigh and tear and heart-moan. He has said that if a mother should forget her child, He will not forget thee, His creature. Bear your sufferings for a little time; He will aid you in bearing them and reward you for having borne them." But tell him, "There is no God to hear you; or, if there be a God, He is relegated to the unknown and the unknowable by Agnosticism. There is no God; or, if there be one, He is too far away and too glorious to care for a broken-hearted wretch like you." Take away the doctrine of faith, and suicide—which is becoming so common—is the resort of the child of misfortune in the hour of misery.

And, as faith diminishes, suicide must increase. Statistics show us that in ten years it increased thirty per cent. in Germany. It is increasing in France, and will increase in proportion as faith loses its hold upon the children of men. One thing is remarkable in the statistics of suicide, and that is the disproportion of women to men. Women are supposed to believe more and trust more deeply than men, and in one list of one hundred and sixty-six cases, where suicide was attributable to weariness of life, there were found but six women to one hundred men. It is known that among Germans who endeavour to act out their faith, as the Catholics and Lutherans, suicide is almost unknown. So that it is not to be attributed to a national temperament, but to loss of faith and of hope, which makes life wearisome.

It is remarked of the Irish who have faith, that suicide is almost unheard of amongst them; and this is to be attributed, at least to a great extent, to the influence of that faith upon them in the hour of their trying afflictions. Some have asserted that it is rather pugnacity than piety. An Irishman does not like to be beaten in a fight, even in the "fight of life," and regards suicide as an act of cowardice, which in truth it is. But this is not sufficient to account for his victory over affliction. I remember asking a poor fellow who had been very badly treated by his Irish landlord, and who had otherwise great sorrows, if he ever felt tempted to commit suicide. His mother-tongue was Irish, and English came later to him as a sort of step-mother tongue, and he occasionally blundered in it. "No, your reverence," he replied, "I never felt tempted to commit suicide; that is, never on myself, your reverence!" "And why did you not think of it in all your misfortunes?" "Why, because if I died immediately after committing suicide I could not ask pardon of God Almighty, and I would go to hell for all eternity to live under as bad a landlord as I had in Ireland. He could not be worse! Besides, I have hope that God will reward a poor man in the end if he is only patient and bears the sufferings the Almighty sends him." All this poor man's hopes were founded on doctrines. Mere sentiment would have little influence on him.

I might continue to show you that doctrines underlie and give motive to all the great works of Christian civilization. To expect effects without causes, to tear up the root and the stem, and hope that the flower and the fruit will remain, to attempt to retain the morality of Christianity without its doctrinal teaching, is as illogical as it is destructive of true civilization.

I think I can already see in the comparative levity with which men begin to regard the great crime of perjury, and in the fact that it is not as certainly and as severely punished now as in former times, evidence of the effect of neglecting to realize the importance of doctrinal teaching. Perjury supposes belief in two great truths—1st, that God may be called to witness what we state; 2nd, that He will punish

any man who calls on Him to witness a lie as the truth. In proportion to the depth of our faith in these truths is our dread of perjury. If we deny them entirely, perjury is no more than lying, which is proverbially easy to many people. I have shown how many other great conservative influences depend on faith in doctrines, and must fall with that faith.

But some one may say that it is utterly impossible that we should go back to the Paganism from which Christianity has liberated us. There is no danger of our going back to precisely the old forms of that Paganism. Yet we must remember that human nature is always the same, and that mere culture will not save us. We have no greater nor as great poets as Horace and Virgil, no greater nor as great orators as Cicero, no greater moralist outside the pale of Christianity than Seneca, and yet they could not save society from the civilized barbarism of Paganism.

We must remember that though the new religion of the future of which some men dream may not be called Paganism, it is Paganism under another name. We occasionally hear of the "Religion of Humanity." What is this but Paganism, which deified all that was true and beautiful and good, with all that was vile in our nature, and called these things by various names, the deities of its religion? If any one whispered to the infidel philosophers of France who sought the destruction of the Christian religion that the day would come when they would find themselves worshipping at a pagan altar, they would have smiled in derision. But false principles soon act themselves out into institutions. Human reason was deified, and the goddess of reason—a dancing girl of Paris—stood on the high altar of Notre Dame, a fit symbol of the prostituted reason that ruled the hour. But after a time some philosopher might say, "Why not a goddess of love, a power stronger than reason and more universal in its influence? We will not call her Venus, because that would sound like old Paganism. We will call her glorious "Human Love." "But," cries out another, "we should, above all, have a god of spotless French Honour, and another of Military Glory," and so on through the whole range of human passions, good and bad,

until the Pantheon should be complete. Man is a religious being. If he worship not God, he will worship himself. Deny the doctrines of faith, and you try to kill Christianity and establish some form of Paganism.

In the name of our Christian civilization, I, a Bishop of the Christian Church, lift up my voice to warn the representative men who hear me, that the popular modern system of teaching morality without the doctrines that motive it, whether that system be called Christian ethics, or moral instruction, or unsectarian teaching, is sapping the very foundations of Christianity and Christian civilization.

Therefore, to sum up what I have been saying to you, because the spirit of unselfishness is the best test of the civilization of mankind, and because, judged by this criterion, Christian civilization stands infinitely above all others ; because in regard to the weak and unfortunate of our race it has changed the face of the world and the sentiments of mankind ; because it has effected these beneficent results by the teaching of great positive doctrines that give motives to self-sacrifice and by a powerful organism known as the Catholic Church ; and because in proportion as men ignore these two influences, the doctrines and the Church, there is danger of their losing the civilization which these produced :—Therefore it is all-important that those who do not accept the Church should at least insist on the teaching of those positive preserving doctrines of morality, and that the children of the Church should renew their love and allegiance to her, and unite for the preservation of Christian civilization with those outside her pale in every effort to preserve even human faith in every conservative principle that upholds Christian civilization.

THE BAN OF THE HARRINGTONS.

BY C. M. HOME.

CHAPTER I.

"I SAY, Phil, what on earth have you been tramping up and down the passage for?"

And George Dormer carefully closed the door of his brother's room behind him, and stood with his back against it.

Phil was sitting up in his bed with his eyes very wide open and rather a scared look on his face; the moonlight was streaming through the window and made the room as light as day.

"Never been out of bed, on my honour," he answered quickly, "Why, George, I thought it was you pacing up and down, saying your rosary, and that you must be walking in your sleep!"

"Saying my rosary! What made you think that?"

"Well, the rattle of the beads,—only there seemed to be about a dozen pairs of feet, instead of one."

George sat down on a chair by his brother's bedside, and after a pause he said thoughtfully, "Let us compare notes. I was waked up suddenly by steps—lots of steps, it seemed—pacing up and down the passage, with a monotonous sound of low voices as if reciting the office, or saying the rosary, and, as you say, I heard the rattle of the beads. First I thought it was you walking about in

your sleep, just as you speculated about me,—a nice thing to do on a cool spring night, when you come down here to get over the influenza! Then I thought it must be the servants moving about, and wondered if Uncle James was worse. I began to feel rather creepy, and when the sounds left off, I dashed across here, but I confess my courage was oozing out at my fingers' ends when I reached your door. Now, old fellow, what did *you* hear?"

"Exactly the same sounds you did. What can it be? Rats?"

"May be, only they don't monotone, I suppose, although I have heard of singing mice."

"Servants talking in their sleep?"

"No, it was not overhead; all I heard there was old Dixon snoring. Oh, Phil! the steps are coming past again!"

Both heads turned towards the door, and they held their breaths to listen, while gradually the sound grew more distinct of footsteps advancing at an even pace from a distance; nearer and nearer they came, down the long corridor, till they passed the door of the room. It was the sound of many feet walking at a measured pace and keeping step, and as they neared the room, the two brothers heard distinctly the rattle of beads and the rustle of long garments, trailing on the uncarpeted floor.

Phil grasped George's hand tightly. They were only lads of eighteen, twin brothers, and this was their first experience of the supernatural.

"Let's say the *De profundis*," whispered Phil. George knelt down by the side of the bed, still holding his brother's hand. At the words, "Requiescant in pace," all was silent. With a sigh of relief George rose from his knees, and turned towards the window, then in a startled voice

he cried, "Look, Phil! Look!" Phil sprang out of bed, but George, mindful of his brother even in his excitement, snatched up a blanket and wrapped it round him, as he stood at his side, gazing in the same direction.

The house and terrace beneath stood out clear and distinct in the cold white light of the moon; but the shrubbery beyond was wrapped in deepest gloom; and *there*, where the shadows were blackest, something was moving, winding along the path beneath the dark firs. An opening in the trees, a little way further on, made a bright patch of moonlight, and the brothers watched silently and with breathless eagerness to see what would emerge from the darkness. With a chill feeling of terror, they discerned what seemed to be a solemn procession of spectral figures, dressed alike; two and two they passed from the black shade into the clear moonlight, which glistened on their white mantles, the cowls of which were drawn over their heads. They quitted the path, and turning, disappeared among the trees.

For a few moments neither of the brothers spoke; they gazed, as if spell-bound, at the spot where the ghostly procession had been last seen.

"Phil, how pale you are! You are quite cold. Do get back into bed," exclaimed George, but his voice sounded forced and hard.

"Don't go away then, there's a good fellow," said Phil.

"No fear! It sounds abominably cowardly, but I don't think I *could* go through that corridor again to-night; Here, pitch me one of your pillows, and I'll take possession of this arm-chair."

CHAPTER II.

In the sunny morning light and seated at a breakfast table spread with north-country profusion, George and Philip Dormer began to question whether the ghostly terrors of the preceding night might not have been, like some fantastic dream, the effect of imagination.

But no! the impression was too vivid: and reason about it as they might, the mystery could not be solved.

Uncle James was not well enough to come down to breakfast, but he sent a kind message to his nephews that they must contrive to amuse themselves till luncheon, when he hoped to be able to join them.

"I'll tell you what, Phil, we'll go and explore all about that shrubbery," said George, "and see where those fellows could have disappeared to, last night!"

"All right, George, I'm ready. I know the spot exactly! Just where the path crosses the carriage drive."

The brothers went out at the hall door, and began by making a careful inspection of the outside of the house. It was a comparatively modern building, with nothing romantic or mediæval about it to fire the imagination; no oriel windows, nor turret stairs, nor gloomy moat. It was nothing more than an unpicturesque, prosaic, rather straggling, family mansion, of the conventional, comfortable style. The grounds were extensive, and in splendid order, and the shrubbery well planted. The brothers followed the footpath that skirted one side of the shrubbery, till they came to a clump of dark firs, from under the

shade of which the white-mantled figures of the preceding night had emerged into the patch of moonlight.

"*Here* is where they turned off the path into the wood," cried Phil.

"But where could they have gone?" asked his brother; "the bushes are so thick here; nothing could get past these brambles!"

"Let's try, though! I'm certain this is where they went. Look here! we can get through between these low bushes."

And pushing their way through the brushwood, they came upon what looked like a waste bit of land, where some remains of old stone masonry lay scattered about. Whilst they were poking about amongst the stones, half expecting to come upon some secret vault, or something to explain the mystery of the night before, a heavy foot-step approached, the branches were pushed aside, and the head gardener appeared, an old family retainer who had been all his life on the estate.

"Ask your pardon, young gents," he said touching his cap, "but I see'd you from the farther copse, across the lawn, and thought may be one on you was Master Walter, so I just come over to make sure. We're expecting him, you see, every day. He's a fine young gentleman, is Master Walter; it does one's heart good to see 'im about the place."

The brothers soon fell into conversation with the old man, who was quite ready to be friendly and communicative, when he found they were Master Walter's cousins. They were cousins by the mother's side, for her sister had married a Catholic, and this was how it happened that they had never before been at the Priory, because Uncle James did not like Catholics. But at Oxford, though the

cousins were at different colleges, they had been thrown into the way of Walter Harrington, and had formed a fast friendship with him, so that he had made a point of their passing the next vacation at the Priory. His father never refused him anything, and felt attracted to the brothers as soon as he made their acquaintance. Walter had been obliged to pay a promised visit of a few days to another college friend before returning home, and had begged his cousins to look after his father for him, till he could join them ; so that they were more with Mr. Harrington than they might otherwise have been.

As they walked on through the grounds, Phil asked what the clearing among the trees, and the remains of some stone buildings could be. The old man stopped, and looked at them a moment before answering.

"Well," he said, "that there is what I calls a mystery. Over and over again, to my certain knowledge, that there spot has been dug up, and good dressing laid down, and it's been planted careful! But never a tree, no, nor a shrub, nor so much as brambles, won't grow there. And that's the truth!"

"But what do you think the place was? What used to be there?" asked George.

"Well, sir," said the gardener, "I have 'eard as how, long ago, the owners of this place weren't Protestants, as they are now, you see, though they was all the same family, the 'Arringtons. They was of your persuasion. And they do say as this was their place o' worship; but how far that's true, I can't say; 'twas long afore my time."

The brothers looked at each other, and Phil said, hesitatingly, "Did you ever hear of any idea that the place was haunted?"

The old man pushed aside his cap, and scratched his

head. "I can't say as how I haven't heard summat of the kind, and that ghosts have been seen. But I don't hold with that sort o' thing, though people does tell queer tales about the place."

The brothers did not like to question the old man any further, but resolved to mention the subject to their uncle when he joined them at luncheon. So when he was wheeled in, for he had an acute fit of gout, though not bad enough to confine him entirely to his own room, they made two or three attempts to tell him of their experience of the night. But when they spoke of the footsteps and the rattle of the beads, he only laughed at them, and rallied them on their cowardice, assuring them that "if only they had looked sharply, they must have seen that each figure carried its head under its arm; ghosts are always supposed to do that." When he saw that the lads were in earnest, and that they could not shake off the impression of what they had seen, he got a little vexed, and declared that *he* knew nothing about spectres and haunted houses, and thought it a pity that Catholics were so superstitious.

However, the brothers agreed afterwards that he evidently knew more than he chose to confess: they had observed his quick, sharp glance of interest, on the first mention of their nocturnal adventure, and felt sure that the levity with which he treated the subject was more than half assumed.

That night, George and Phil determined to sit up together in one room, and watch. Hour after hour passed, and as the time drew near at which the sounds had been heard the night before, they left off talking, and sat in silence listening; but there was only the sound of the ticking of a clock outside, and the beating of their own hearts.

At last Phil got up impatiently; "It's past the time, nothing is going to happen to-night," he said; "perhaps they only come on one particular night in the year." He went towards the window, and started back.

"George!" he whispered hoarsely, "look here." His brother was at his side in a moment, and looked out into the white moonlight.

On the wide terrace immediately under their windows, in the full clear light of the moon, a solitary figure paced up and down. It was clad in a dark garment down to the feet, which were bare, and over it a white mantle, the hood of which was drawn over its head, concealing the face. With measured tread it paced the terrace from end to end, intent, it appeared, on the book it held. But as the brothers watched it in breathless silence, both of them noted the same peculiarity. Though every fold of the mantle was distinct and well defined, though each step of the sandalled feet was heard on the gravel, *no shadow* was cast by the figure upon the moonlit terrace.

"I *wish* Uncle James could see it!" whispered Phil presently.

"Let's go and make him look out! He doesn't seem nervous," said George, turning towards the door.

"If we should meet those others—,"

"We shall hear them coming, and cut back. Leave the door open;" and they went down. In another minute they were at their uncle's door.

From the loud, clear voice with which he answered their knock, it would seem that he too had been watching. "Well, what's the matter?" he asked, as the brothers come in, "ghosts parading the passages again, with their heads under their arms, eh? What is it?"

"Oh, Uncle James! I wish you could look out of the window," cried both.

"Here! get me out of bed and into my chair, and wheel me to the window." Quickly and silently they obeyed, and the three looked out from the dark room upon the moon-lit terrace. Up and down from end to end, paced the figure, with bent head and open book: they could see it even more distinctly here than from the floor above, and they observed that when in the white moonlight it cast no shadow, and when it passed into the shade of the house there was a soft light that floated like a vapour round it.

For some time they gazed in silence; Mr. Harrington spoke not a word, but never took his eyes from the figure. Once George whispered, "Shall I go out and question it!" But his uncle answered hastily, almost sharply, "No, No!" Presently George began the *De profundis* in an under tone, and both brothers knelt down. When he had finished, Mr. Harrington exclaimed in a tone of relief, "See, you have conjured him away!"

The figure was no longer there.

"Go up to bed now, boys," said their uncle, when they had helped him on to the couch again. "Nothing more will come to-night. Don't sit up! I will talk to you about this in the morning."

There was a grave anxiety in his face, a sort of terror in his eyes that struck them both, but they left him as he desired, and went to bed in Phil's room.

CHAPTER III.

In the morning the brothers were summoned to Mr. Harrington's room, as he sent word that he did not feel equal to the fatigue of being carried downstairs.

"Take the easy chair, Phil," he said after they had come in; "you look white. I shouldn't know that you were Phil, but for the white face."

"Oh, uncle," laughed George, "there *is* a difference between us! Phil is a slightly reduced copy of me; a little shorter, a little thinner and a little fairer. But he looks ever so much better than he did when he came down here."

"And would look better still, if he had not been scared. Well boys, I was hard upon you yesterday, but you must forgive me. Although I knew the tradition of the house, personal proof of its veracity I had never had. Now you will want to know all about it. When Henry VIII. was despoiling the monasteries (I think him just as great a monster as you do, though I am a Protestant) he was told of the fair domain of the Priory of Whitefriars—Carmelites, as of course you know. His wicked satellites came down here, forced their way into the choir where the monks were singing Vespers—it was some great festival,—and demanded of the Prior the surrender of the house and lands and the sacred vessels. As he refused to give up to seculars what he believed had been given to God, the intruders proceeded to violence. They drove out the friars, and Ralph Harrington, the son of their leader,

struck the Prior down with his own dagger. When the place was empty, and the shrines rifled, Henry gave the lands to Thomas Harrington and his successors. Ralph was not long after thrown from his horse and killed on his own grounds; and after that, the Priory has never been inherited in direct succession. The long procession of ghostly friars was always found to forebode some misfortune to the family; but when the Prior alone was seen, then there was danger to the heir. This is the tradition; it may be all nonsense, an idle tale perhaps, but I confess I have been terribly uneasy about Walter since last night; I could not rest until the post had come in; but, thank God, here is a letter from him, and he will be at home to-morrow!"

"It is a sad story," remarked George, thoughtfully, "but, uncle, you might make restitution, mightn't you?"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Harrington sharply. "We are not responsible! How can we help what our ancestors did? And why should I despoil my son of any portion of his inheritance, for the crime of another man? For it was a crime, I own; since every man ought to be free to follow the religion he thinks best."

"It would all come right, if only Walter was a Catholic," observed Phil.

"So *you* may think, but—"

He was interrupted by the entrance of a servant. "A telegram, sir," said the man, presenting one of those ominous-looking orange envelopes. Mr. Harrington had seen it, and the look of terror had come back into his eyes, even before the man spoke. A grey shadow passed over his face, and left it deadly white, and his lips quivered as he said in a scarcely audible voice to George,

"He is dead. Open it. Tell me what it is!" George

tore open the envelope, and read, "Walter dying.—Come at once." It was sent by the college friend with whom the young man was staying.

Mr. Harrington groaned. "I knew it," he murmured; "I felt it last night. It is true about the curse. I am unable to go to him," and he covered his face with his hands.

"*I* will go, Uncle James!" exclaimed George. "Let Phil stay here with you, and I will start at once, and telegraph how I find him directly I get there."

"Go, both of you," said the uncle; "I want no one! I would rather you both went. Write, one of you, *at once*, to say what—what it is, and if there is hope. You understand,—don't keep me in suspense, whichever way it is. I can't bear this strain long. God alone knows what the boy is to me!"

The brothers hurried off without delay, caught an express, and by an early hour in the afternoon reached Briarton, where the Desboroughs lived. The servant who opened the door looked grave and shook his head, when they inquired after Mr. Walter Harrington. "I believe he's never been conscious since the accident, sir; and the doctor who has just been seems doubtful if he ever will be conscious again; leastways not in this world." He took them to the drawing room, where Lady Desborough and one of her daughters sat, pale and sad, looking tired and anxious.

George and Phil explained that their uncle had sent them, because he was too ill to come himself, and Lady Desborough then gave them a hurried account of the accident:—how Walter had plunged into a dangerous part of the river, to save a drowning man whose boat had capsized; that he had been carried away by the current and dashed against rocks, so that, when his body was

recovered some way further down the stream, it was feared that he had received some internal injury, as well as the blow on the head which had rendered him unconscious.

At that moment Richard Desborough came in, and greeted them, saying hastily, "Harrington has opened his eyes, and tried to say something, but the nurse thinks his mind must be wandering, for he asked has the father come? Oh, be quick!"

"It is his father he expects, poor dear boy,' said Lady Desborough, with tears in her eyes. "Do go up, Mr. Dormer, won't you? and tell him!"

But George and Phil had exchanged an eager glance, and the former bounded upstairs, Richard Desborough following to guide them to the room; as soon as the door was opened, Walter's dark eyes fell on his cousin, and a ray of gladness flashed from them, and a look of relief came into the white face as he whispered, "George!"

George was by his side in an instant, and took the trembling hand in his; Walter looked earnestly at him, and tried to speak, but no sound would come.

"What is it, dear old fellow?" George said tenderly, bending over him.

With a great effort the words came, but so faintly that George was not sure if he heard right: "A priest!" George knelt down by him. "Do you mean a Catholic priest, Walter?"

"Yes!" Walter said more distinctly; "a priest. Oh, quick, or it will be too late."

George rose with a heightened colour, and whispering to Phil, "Stay with him till I come back, and pray hard," he drew Richard Desborough out of the room, explained the need as briefly as he could, and asked permission to send one of the servants on his errand of mercy. He told

the man if he wished to save Mr. Harrington's life to rush off to the nearest Catholic church and bring a priest at once. "There's one at the corner of the next street," said the man; "they're monks, if that will do, sir!" and he went off, while George returned to Walter's bedside, where he and Phil prayed as perhaps they had never prayed before, for they had scarcely realized till now how much they loved their young cousin. Presently the door opened noiselessly, and a tall figure in a dark habit and white mantle, with a cowl, drawn over his head which was slightly bent, and with sandalled feet, walked past them up to the side of the bed, and bent over Walter. The brothers involuntarily looked at each other, and Phil whispered, "Oh, George, the ghost!" But the figure threw back his cowl and, after speaking a few words to Walter in an under tone, he turned to the brothers, and they saw that it was a Carmelite friar.

"Do you mind leaving us for a few moments?" he said; and they understood and went into the next room. It was more difficult to persuade the nurse to move, till Phil whispered to her that they must write at once to Mr. Harrington and give him a full account of the whole affair, and that *her* testimony was absolutely necessary as to Walter's condition. She was in the middle of her history of the accident, and what poor Walter looked like when he was first carried into the house, when the door of Walter's room opened, and a quiet voice said, "Will you please go to your patient, nurse? he wants something to drink."

As she hurriedly obeyed, the Father said to the boys "I have received your friend into the Church, I am thankful to say, by his own urgent desire; and now I will stay with him for an hour or so. He does not like me to leave him.'

"Oh, thank you, Father! That *is* good of you!" exclaimed George heartily. "But are you sure you won't get into a row for it at the monastery? Will the Prior be vexed? Unless you mean—oh, Father!—don't say there is danger of death!"

"Truly, I think not, my dear boy, and as to your fears for me, fortunately, I am the Prior," he answered with a smile. "We were singing Vespers when the message came that a dying man wanted a priest at once, so I came off just as I was. You are Catholics, I know," he added kindly, "and your cousin tells me he has long wished in secret to be what you are; his fear was that he might die with that wish unfulfilled. Do not look so distressed," as he saw the pained look in Phil's eyes, "you are not going to lose him yet. He will not die. Our Blessed Lady means him to do her much good service in the world first. Stay here with him if you can, till he can be moved—at any rate one of you. And see that he is kept perfectly quiet; humanly speaking everything depends on that."

"The Prior! *you* are the Prior?" repeated Phil, in a bewildered tone.

"My brother is struck by a very strange coincidence," said George, "which I should like, Father, to explain to you." And he proceeded to describe the ghostly apparitions of the two nights at the Priory.

The Father was silent for a few minutes; then he said gravely, "this is one of God's mysteries, and in this case a mystery of mercy. Hitherto it had seemed a mystery of retribution. 'Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the *third* and *fourth* generation,'—was it not so?"

He turned thoughtfully away, and sat down by Walter's bed, who was now sleeping peacefully.

Walter Harrington slowly recovered. Phil stayed with him, but George, as soon as he found that all danger was over, went back to the Priory to take care of his uncle, whose anxiety had made him worse. George broke to him the news of his son's conversion ; but Mr. Harrington received the news without either sorrow or anger. Indeed he seemed thankful to acquiesce in George's opinion that now the curse would pass away.

The Prior became quite a favourite with Lady Desborough and her son, and his daily visits to Walter were looked forward to by them all.

It may well be supposed that when Walter came home once more, he never rested until he had induced his father to be received into the Church. And not very long after, the Prior was prevailed upon to establish a Carmelite Foundation on the Priory grounds, on the very site of the original monastery so unjustly seized by Henry VIII. A church was built on the spot where the ancient chapel once stood, and as the old gardener, on the day when the first stone was laid, watched with wondering eyes the long procession of Bishop, priests, and acolytes that wended their way back to the house, he remarked to Phil, "Well, sir, to think after all the trouble we've had with that there bit of land, Master Walter should have found out summat as would grow on it, after all!"

It is needless to say that the ghosts have never been heard or seen since.

THROUGH STRANGE PATHS.

(*Founded on fact.*)

BY C. M. HOME.

I HAD been about twelve months in London, studying for the medical profession, when one summer afternoon, as I was hurrying to my lodgings to get ready for a match between the Carleton Eleven and the Essex Comets, I noticed a ragged urchin who appeared to be following me, now dodging from side to side, now peering up into my face. I thought he was going to beg, but he made no attempt to accost me, and after carefully feeling in my pocket to make sure that my handkerchief was safe, I was turning the latch-key when I felt my coat pulled. There behind me on the door-step stood the boy,—a tattered, unkempt specimen of the London arab, with eyes sharp as a fox's glancing up at my face, as he asked, "Ain't your name Penrose?"

"Yes—what may be your business?"

The boy dropped his voice to a cautious whisper. "It's Jim Davis as sent me. He is dying and wants bad to see yer."

"Where is he?"

"Don't know—only got a message through another cove, but they'll tell yer at the Three Tuns, in Barker's Court."

For a moment I hesitated. Barker's Court was in one of the worst slums of London, and in my country home I had heard many a tale of the crime and misery of those

quarters. But Jim was the son of an old coachman of ours, and had married my mother's favourite maid, a good steady girl whom every one thought perfectly demented to throw herself away on such a scamp.

For though, when I was a little lad of ten, Jim, who was then fourteen, had taught me how to row and to fish, I was very soon forbidden to have any intercourse with him. He had but a doubtful reputation in the village, and was supposed to be so unlawfully clever with his hands that the girls and I nick-named him Long-fingers.

About six months before I started for London. Jim had disappeared from Briarly, leaving his wife and a baby girl quite unprovided for. My mother did what she could for poor Lucy and the child, and the girls had their frocks frilled and furbelowed, and turned inside out, or whatever feminine manœuvres suited best, as a pretext for giving Lucy some needlework. Then there came a report that Jim had been in prison for house-breaking, but had got off in the trial. Now, was it possible that the poor scamp was dying? If he was, would there be any chance of helping his soul? Something urged me to try, and telling the boy to wait for me, I rushed up to my room, put my watch away safely in a drawer, and with rather a pang at the sight of the cricketing flannels spread out temptingly on the bed, I ran down stairs and found the urchin standing on his head, just outside the door. He turned a cart wheel for a few yards down the street, and then, looking back to see if I was following him, he started off at a brisk pace through various back thoroughfares, till we came to a miserable looking quarter, where three ways met. "Take the first turn to the right," he said, "and second to the left, and there you are."

Tossing the boy a sixpence, I followed his instructions

and found myself at the entrance of Barker's Court. Before venturing down, I asked a man in a corner shop where I should find the Three Tuns.*

"It's been shut up, sir, two days ago—the police are watching it."

Then, seeing my puzzled look, the man added in a lower tone, "You see, sir, it was suspected to be a thieves' receiving house, so it's been shut up."

I went on, however, thinking that there must be some one left in charge of the premises who could give me the necessary information, and in a few minutes I found myself before the closed, dirty-green, mud-bespattered door of a small public-house, the shutters of which were up, and the place apparently deserted. Over my head hung the sign of the Three Tuns, and as I stood knocking and listening to the hollow echo it awoke in the empty house, a butcher boy passing down the court stopped his whistling to say, "Kick at the door, if you want to get in."

I took the hint; in another moment there was a sound inside as of a heavy creaking door being stealthily opened; then steps came nearer; bolts were drawn back, the key turned, a chain unfastened and a hoarse voice whispered, "Who is it?" I gave my name,—the door was hastily half opened, scarcely wide enough for me to squeeze through, and the same voice said fiercely, "Come in, can't you?"

I pushed my way in, and the door was instantly closed, locked, bolted, and chained behind me. For a moment I could see nothing in the darkness, but as my eyes got accustomed to the gloom, I found myself confronted with

* The visit to Barker's Court, and the subsequent one to Birdlime Walk, are drawn without exaggeration from the personal experience of the writer.

a ruffianly looking man in his shirt sleeves, which were rolled up above his elbows. He was a big burly fellow with a red face, scarred and swollen like that of a prize-fighter; and he scowled at me with a fierce gleam in his blood-shot eyes. His right arm was doubled up behind him, as if to hide something he held in that hand—was it a life-preserver or a pistol? And with the other he signed to me imperiously to go forward. There was no choice, so I walked up the narrow dark passage with the ruffian close at my heels, and through an open door at the end, I entered a long narrow room lighted only by a skylight,—there were no windows, but the skylight ran along the whole length of the roof. The only furniture was a common deal table in the middle of the room, with a bench on each side; while at the further end, three or four steps of the width of the room led up to a folding door. Corresponding with this, at the end by which I had entered was a similar flight of three or four steps, to a raised platform with a table on it, placed cross-wise, as it were, to the long one down the centre of the room. There were also a couple of chairs, and on one of these, facing the length of the room, sat another man.

I felt instinctively that the less I looked about me the better, so I took in the surroundings with a rapid glance. At a quick sign from the man at the table, a chair was pushed to me by the ruffian, who kept close behind me ont of my sight, but I felt that whatever was in his hand was ready for me the instant a signal might be given by the other at the table.

I ought to say that I was placed directly opposite the second man, so that I could not, without turning my head, see any other part of the room. The door by which I had entered was on my left hand, a little behind me.

The man at the table was not a ruffian like the other, or at any rate, he was more presentable; but there was something that froze one's blood in the stony cruel set of his face, and the hard, pitiless eyes, that never turned to look at me, but always looked over my head at the ruffian behind me, holding him back as it were, with his eyes, till the moment should come to strike.

"What is your business here?" he asked. I answered quietly, telling him who I was, how I had been accosted by the boy, and received the message from Jim; and how I had been sent to this place to learn his address. I wonder now how I could have appeared so self-possessed, and managed to speak as if I saw nothing unusual in my position, and was quite accustomed to sit, like Damocles, with a sword hanging by a single hair over my head.

"What interest have you in Jim Davis?" asked the man, in the same hard voice.

I explained my acquaintance with Jim as a boy, and as I was speaking, a gleam of intelligence passed from the eyes of my questioner to the man behind me. I heard no movement, but when I finished my explanation, there stood by me a rather portly woman in a seal-skin jacket, over which hung a broad gold chain. I took care not to look surprised, and the man at the table made her a sign to sit down, which she did immediately between him and me. She looked flustered and frightened, and from her manner, I could see she knew why the ruffian was behind my chair, though she never looked at him. In fact, she only looked at me, but she trembled violently, and seemed altogether half beside herself with terror.

The man at the table said coldly, "If your tale is true, Mrs. Barnes will know you. She comes from Briarly.

"Oh," I said, turning courteously to the portly lady, "I

am glad to see any one from home. You know my family, don't you? I am Lionel Penrose."

A slight frown from the man at the table passed over my head, and a rapid glance that said plainly, "Not yet —wait a minute."

"Oh, dear, yes, sir, to be sure!" cried the poor woman, earnestly. "Why, of course I know you, and your dear Ma, and those sweet young ladies, your sisters. To be sure. Why, if Jim's wife was not your dear Ma's maid, afore she was married! And you always liked Jim, and he was proud of going a-fishing along o' his little master, as he called you."

"Well, now, Mrs. Barnes," I said—, "I've just heard that Jim is dying, and I was told to come here, to the Three Tuns, to learn where I could find him. I can't let him die without seeing him once more. Can you direct me to him?"

The poor woman could scarcely conceal her terror; she glanced appealingly at the man by the table, who answered by a scarcely perceptible sign, and she then gave me the address I wanted.

"Is that all?" asked the man, still looking beyond me at the villain behind.

"Thank you, very much," I answered; "that's all. Good bye, Mrs. Barnes, I am glad to have seen you." And I shook hands heartily, though I had never heard her name before, and could not remember ever having seen her.

The man at the table, without rising or looking at me, and still keeping his eyes fixed on what was behind me, pointed to the door by which I had entered. I thanked him, and walked calmly out into the dark passage, wondering if I should be felled by a blow from behind before reaching the entrance door.

The steps followed close behind me, the door was again unchained, unlocked, unbolted, and opened just wide enough for me to pass out, and to my amazement I found myself safe outside the silent, deserted public-house, in the noise and bustle of the streets once more.

Never did I breathe a more fervent "Deo gratias," nor thank more gratefully the holy Guardian Angel whom God had commanded to stand between me and death. The address that had been given me was in Birdlime Walk, a place at no great distance, but of such ill-repute that no respectable individual could venture near it after sunset, and even the police never went there singly.

I determined, therefore, to put off my visit to poor Jim until the next day, and went home to smoke my cigar and ruminate over the strange experience I had just gone through.

The following day I sallied forth after a late breakfast, and with some difficulty found my way to Birdlime Walk, for you could only get to it through the queerest of crooked little streets, dingy courts and alleys. It proved to be a wide, quiet, dead-alive sort of place, with no traffic of any kind, nor any sign of life or movement in the street. I seemed to be the only foot-passenger, and my steps sounded low and hollow on the pavement. It was like some out-of-the-way nook of a city of the dead. I hastened on to the number given me, went up to the steps, and in at the open door—most of the doors stood open—and rapped with my knuckles at the first door inside. It was opened, and I went in. The day was sultry, but there was a large fire in the room, at which one or two women were cooking; while ten or twelve men sat on low stools or chairs, or lay on the floor round about, They did not offer to move on my entrance, but as some of them glanced at me

enquiringly, but quite good-humouredly, I explained that I had come to see an old friend, Jim Davis, who I had heard was ill.

"In there," said one of the men, pointing with his thumb to an inner room, the door of which stood ajar, and I went in. There were several beds in this room, and on the one nearest the door lay poor Jim—so changed from the handsome stalwart country lad of past times, that I should scarcely have recoguised him, only that the old look came back for a moment into his face, and his poor hollow eyes filled with tears, as stretching out an emaciated hand, he whispered—

"Mr. Lionel! God bless you!"

I took his thin hand in mine. "Why, Jim," I said, "what is the matter with you? Tell me all about it."

There were two women hovering over him, preparing food, and he made a sign to wait till they were gone; and when they had joined the others in the next room he asked me to shut the door.

Then as I seated myself again by his bed, he said, "You see, Mr. Lionel, I had a tussle with the perlice to escape being nabbed for a job I had been about. I got some hard blows, and one in the chest has done for me. Oh, Mr. Lionel," he continued earnestly, "I'm dying, I know it; but I don't want to die. I'm afraid to die. This is an awful place to die in."

A suspicion flashed across my mind, and I asked "Are they kind to you here, Jim?"

"They mean to be kind," he answered, "but *their* way to cheer you is to sing and dance, and they're often drunk. And then they'll dance round my bed at night, and sing awful bad songs, it makes me feel as if I was already among the devils. I *can't* get ready to die here, Mr. Lionel."

His sunken eyes looked up wistfully into mine.

"All right, Jim," I said, getting up. "I'll carry you off to my lodgings, now, at once."

But he had his hand on my arm. "No, sir," he whispered, "I *can't* go from here. You see, sir, the perlice are on the look out for me; if I stirred from this place I'd be nabbed directly, and more would suffer than myself. That's why they wouldn't let me out of this house. All must be done very quiet, sir; but if you could, Mr. Lionel, just get me out of this room—beg them to give me a quiet place above, where I wouldn't hear the awful noise and swearing and wickedness, and if you'd look in yourself, sir, though it's not a fit place for the likes of you, but just to help me to get ready. When I lie here awake all night, what the priest taught me as a little lad, comes back to me, and I have no hope, only the terrible fear of standing before God."

"Thank God that it does come back to you, Jim," I said, trying to keep back the tears that would start to my own eyes. "It is a sign of His mercy. He has not cast you off as a hardened sinner, and by His help I'll do all I can for you. Drink a little of this, for you are getting quite exhausted. Don't be afraid, Jim, I will get them to give you another room."

On returning to the outer room and approaching the group of men round the fire, I noticed one whom I had not seen when I passed through before. He was leaning back in his chair with folded arms and an immovable face, his eyes fixed on the wall above my head. I felt that my movements had been watched, for there was no mistaking the cruel cast of the stony face. It was the man who sat at the table at the Three Tuns, and controlled my fate on the preceding day. As it seemed his intention not to

recognise *me*, I felt it was politic to look as if I had never seen *him* before; and addressing the company in general, I asked whether it would be possible for Jim to have a quiet room to himself, to die in. "For," I added, "I am a medical student, and I see plainly he is dying."

The others looked at the stony-faced man—he evidently ruled here as at the Three Tuns,—and he, without even glancing at me, answered there would be no difficulty about that, if I chose to pay for it.

This, of course, I readily promised, and then added that I should like to come and see him every day while he lived, and also to bring a really clever doctor, so as to give him every chance of recovery—and a priest. There was a low growl of disapproval from the men; but with a stern glance, which silenced them instantly, the stony-faced man said, "You may bring them. Doctors are safe, and priests know how to keep their own counsel."

Then calling an old woman who was mending some garments in the further corner of the room, he bade her see if the two top rooms were fit to be occupied, and light a fire at once.

I stayed with Jim till the old woman came to say the rooms were ready, and then carried up the poor wasted form, and laid it on a decent bed in a fairly well-lighted attic. The old woman promised to look after him, and showed me another room opening out of this one, in which she said she could cook anything he needed.

Then, promising Jim I would soon pay him another visit and would try to bring a friend, I left him.

In the afternoon I hunted up my old friend, Donald Fraser, a clever young physician, practising at the West End. He was a generous, kind-hearted fellow, but unhappily an agnostic, and on that account had been firmly

rejected by my younger sister, who told him plainly she would never marry a man who was not a Christian and a Catholic.

The decision nearly broke her heart, and as to Fraser, he had been so unwontedly morose, not to say savage, since his disappointment, that I half hesitated to make any request to him. However, the matter was urgent, and he listened with interest to the description of my visits to Barker's Court and Birdlime Walk, and readily agreed to meet me at the entrance of the latter locality in an hour's time. Old Father John, at the Mission Chapel close by, was equally willing to accompany me; and I thought it more prudent if we all went together. I should now be known in Birdlime Walk, and might safely pioneer the others.

Donald Fraser scowled a little when he saw who my companion was, but he raised his hat courteously to the old priest, and we entered the house in silence. The same men were lounging round the fire, but I saw nothing of my stony-faced acquaintance. When we reached the top flight of stairs, Fraser said he would wait in the outer room while I took in Father John.

I shall never forget the look of mingled shame and hope that came into poor Jim's face at the priest's entrance; and it was with a deep feeling of thankfulness that I left them together.

Fraser was standing at the attic window in the other room, looking out at a confused medley of roofs and chimney-pots; he turned round as I closed the door between the two rooms, and said testily, "Why didn't you let me go in first?"

"Souls first, and bodies afterwards," I said.

"So you think your light-fingered friend has a soul, do you?" he asked scornfully.

"Certainly, as sure as I am that you and I have one, though it's not the sort of thing you can find with the point of your dissecting knife."

"It may be, and it may not be—I should think in the case of that young man yonder, it must be an inconvenient possession. Why can't you let the poor wretch die in peace, without worrying him with priests and their old worn-out superstitions?"

"Come, Fraser, none of that," I said; "I hope Jim will die in peace."

I never argued with Fraser, it only made him bitter and profane—he was so wroth with the superstition, as he called it, that had come between him and his earthly happiness.

He made no answer, but turned away and resumed his contemplation of the chimney-pots until Father John rejoined us, saying he would come again in the evening—could I be there?

I readily assented, and was offering to accompany him home, when he replied that the only business that ever brought him into that locality was too well known to render him an object of suspicion.

Mrs. Price, the old woman attended to Jim, was sitting on the stairs to be out of ear-shot, but I called her as Fraser went up to the bed.

Jim was looking weak and exhausted, but there was a peaceful expression on his face that I had not seen before. I noticed that Fraser looked at him curiously, but he was very gentle and kind in his manner, gave a few brief directions to Mrs. Price, and promised to send some medicine and come again the next day.

We made our way together through Birdlime Walk, and it was not till we emerged from that dreary locality that

Fraser said gravely, "No chance of any credit to me out of that case, so the priest and you may see what you can make of him. It seems a pity. He must have been a fine young fellow, and very intelligent."

"Poor Jim! I can scarcely say I am sorry; it would have been hard for him to get out of his entanglements. But you'll do what you can for him, Fraser?"

"Oh, of course; I can give him some ease perhaps, and I'll go with you whenever you like."

I was not sorry that the next day Fraser went with me, Father John should come in, bearing with him the Sacred Victim who is the Ransom and the Life of the sinner; and much to my surprise, the doctor asked if he might remain in the room. He knelt too in the farther corner, while I waited on the priest, as he administered the last Sacraments.

Poor Jim was very exhausted, but he was thankful and resigned, his only care now being to obtain his wife's forgiveness, so that before I left him, I wrote a letter to her at his dictation. As Fraser went down the stairs with me he remarked, "He may live just long enough to get an answer. Poor beggar! he's awfully patient. I suppose faith is a wonderful thing, for I was listening to those prayers, which are really very beautiful, and noting that solemn ritual, with an idea that they must be all ever so far over that poor fellow's head, and yet he takes it all in, as if it was all plainly in his own tongue."

"Well, you know, we believe there is such a thing as grace; and in the second place, Jim, however he has gone astray, was trained up in the faith from a child, and knows what he is about."

"And that's more than most of us do," said Fraser

abruptly. "Ta-ta—I shall be down here Thursday evening."

I was glad to have a kind and affectionate letter from Lucy to read to the poor fellow when next I saw him, for he was evidently very near his end. About the temporal needs of his wife and child, he had no anxiety; he was so confident that my mother would look after them.

I said the prayers for the dying beside his bed, and wished that Fraser would come. Mrs. Price was not of much use, and Jim was fast losing consciousness. As the night wore on, the street, so silent and deserted by day, became alive with evil sounds: screams, drunken songs and shouts, heavy blows and wild shrieks, contrasted strangely with the death-like silence in the room. But Jim heard nothing of all the outer turmoil which made my blood run cold.

After a long weary hour, I was thankful to hear Donald's step coming up the stairs. He shook his head as he bent over Jim and tried to get some restorative between his parched lips.

"Can you stay?" I whispered.

"Yes, all night, if you like; send the old woman to lie down."

"Don't mind me, Penrose," he added, when Mrs. Price was out of the room. "Go on with prayers; there is nothing more to be done."

Another hour passed away, and Jim lay in the same unconscious state, with laboured breathing, while Fraser sat by his side, moistening his lips, or wiping his forehead. At last Jim opened his eyes and struggled to raise himself. I lifted him up, supporting his head on my shoulder and Fraser gave me a glance which expressed that the end was near.

I lighted the blest candle and held it between his fingers,

and made a sign to Donald to give me the crucifix that had slipped out of my reach on the bed.

He took it up hurriedly, as though it burnt his fingers.

"Jesus, Mary, Joseph," whispered the weak voice after me.

Jim had been greatly struck by the wonderful contrition and faith of the Good Thief, and had many times asked me to read to him the Passion of our Lord. When he was a little revived, I began to read it again, and he listened eagerly. Then the mist of death seemed coming over him again, and he said faintly, "Mr. Lionel, I forget —say it again."

"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

A sudden gleam of brightness came across his face, when he heard the words,—an eager stretching out of his hands, as he looked straight before him, and raised his head from my shoulder.

"I can't get into the boat," he said faintly but quite clearly, "help me, Mr. Lionel. The river is so full."

I raised him up a little more, and with that intense look on his face and the out-stretched hands, he murmured, "Lord, remember me—" and sank back.

Fraser was still kneeling by his side, but with his back turned to the foot of the bed, but Jim's sudden action startled him, and he looked round in the direction of his gaze, as if he too expected to see the vision of those dying eyes.

"Go forth, Christian soul," but scarcely had I said the words, when there was one gentle sigh, and I laid back on the pillow all that remained of poor Jim Davis.

Donald Fraser is my brother-in-law now, and a devout

Catholic. Priests who come across him say that he does nearly as much for the souls of his patients as for their bodies. Lucy Davis is nurse to his infant son, and her little girl is a rosy, happy child in a convent orphanage.

Many a Mass is offered for the soul of poor Jim Davis, while I can only look back in thankfulness to God who led us so mercifully "through strange paths."

BISHOP TALBOT

(1726-1790)

BY THE REV. EDWIN H. BURTON

EDMUND BURKE in one of his fiery Bristol speeches of 1780 once exclaimed: "A brother of the Earl of Shrewsbury, a Talbot, a name respectable in this country whilst its glory is any part of its concern, was hauled to the bar of the Old Bailey among common felons, and only escaped perpetual imprisonment, either by some error in the process or that the wretch who brought him there could not correctly describe his person."

This "brother of the Earl of Shrewsbury," of whom Burke speaks, was not only the last Catholic to be tried in England for his priesthood, but he was also the benefactor to whom in the first instance Catholics owe the foundation of St. Edmund's College. The recent translation of his remains thither has led to this effort to put together the story of his life.

Bishop Talbot was one of those hidden workers of the eighteenth century whose lives lie much underground. Their chief desire being to escape notice and to do their work without interference, concealment became with them a second nature; it thus becomes a matter of considerable difficulty to trace their lives in any detail at this distance of time. They kept only the scantiest of records, they wrote no memoirs; and, for the earlier part of the century at least, were careful in writing to render their full meaning accessible only to the initiated.

Rome in their letters appears as *Hilton;* Bishop Gifford, the friend of James II. and Confessor of the Faith, is *Cousin Bona;* Bishop Smith, another of the Vicars-Apostolic of James II., is sometimes *Mr. Harper*, sometimes *Mr. Tarlton*, sometimes *Mr. Brown*. Gother the controversialist appears as *Lovell*, Dodd the historian was in reality Hugh Tootel. The Jesuits were called, among other names, *Birlies* or *Etiamites*. A bishop's district and clergy is referred to as his wife and family, or sometimes by another *alias:* thus the London District was sometimes referred to as *Worthe*. Bishop Petre was called *Mr. White* and Bishop Challoner *Mr. Fisher*.

From these examples it may be inferred that even with documents before us we are often much in the dark as to their full import.

In Bishop Talbot's case the information, having regard to his family connections and the position he occupied among English Catholics, is exceptionally scarce. We have but the barest outline of facts, and the tradition of the personal affection which styled him "The Good Bishop Talbot."

He was born in 1726, being the fourth son of George Talbot and Mary, daughter of Thomas, Viscount Fitzwilliam. His elder brother George became fourteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, on the death of their uncle Gilbert Talbot, a Jesuit, who was commonly known as Grey. The latter renounced his patrimony with but a small reservation and spent his life in humble poverty in the Society. Unfortunately on his death a dispute arose concerning the disposal of his property which led to a law-suit between the Jesuits and the families of Talbot and Dormer. The relatives were successful, but the ill-feeling engendered by the dispute lasted for many years, and may account for the provisions of the Bishop's will to which we shall hereafter refer. Thomas, the younger brother of James, became in his turn Bishop and Vicar-Apostolic of the Midland District.

When old enough to go to school, James Talbot was sent with his brothers to Twyford, Berks, where many of the Catholic gentry were sent as a preparation

for Douay. But the school, which had been founded during the reign of James II. and had known several flourishing periods, was now nearing its decline and fall. Mr. Fleetwood, who had been a most successful headmaster with over one hundred boys under him, resigned his charge in 1732 in order to enter the Society of Jesus. It was found difficult to replace him, though his assistant, Rev. Joseph Gildon, who eventually succeeded him as headmaster, was a man of some reputation as a teacher. With Mr. Gildon's death in 1736, the trouble and difficulties of the school, evidenced by a mortgage and bill of sale, seem to have increased, until it was finally closed during the anti-Catholic movement brought about by the unsuccessful Stuart rising in 1745.

Long before this, however, James Talbot had left Twyford for the great English College at Douay, which he entered on June 1, 1738.

Douay at this time was at the height of its second great period of prosperity. The long and brilliant presidency of Dr. Witham, which had seen the College rebuilt and the number of students largely increased, drew to a close in this very year. The services of a little knot of remarkable men, including Challoner, Robert Manning, and Alban Butler, had ensured a high standard of education, which was fully maintained during the uneventful presidency of Dr. Witham's successor, the learned and kindly Dr. Edward Thornburg.

It is not quite clear when the Talbots finished their school-life. Horace Walpole, detained by rough weather at Calais on his return in 1741 from his long Continental tour, wrote to Sir Horace Mann: "At Boulogne I left Lord Shrewsbury and his mother and brothers and sisters waiting too; Bulstrode passes his winter at the court of Boulogne and then is to travel with the two young Shrewsburys." These two boys seem to have been Charles and John, the second and third brothers of the young Earl, as James and Thomas were still too young to be sent on "the grand tour," and we know that, as a fact, their travels took place in 1747 under the care of Rev. Alban Butler.

Alban Butler, who is now remembered chiefly as the author of *The Lives of the Saints*, was a man of phenomenal learning, who not only surpassed all the Catholics of his age in this respect, but among his fellow-countrymen compelled the respect of such opposite characters as the Duke of Cumberland, "the butcher of Culloden," and Gibbon the historian.

Under his care, James and Thomas, after a brief visit to England in June, 1747, travelled through France and Italy, returning to Douay in November, 1748, to resume their theological studies.

Just two years later—on December 19, 1750—James Talbot was ordained priest, but instead of being sent on the English Mission he was retained at Douay as Professor of Philosophy. From this time we may date that interest in Education which was the leading feature of his career.

He held the chair of Philosophy for two years, after which time he exchanged it for that of Theology, which he held till 1755, spending his spare time in his own studies for the Licentiate of Divinity.

Before this, however, he had taken an important step in the interests of the College. Feeling the need of a separate establishment for the smallest boys of all, a preparatory school to take the place of Twyford, which had now ceased to exist, he bought and presented to the College a country house at Esquerchin. The opening of this new school, which took place on November 19, 1753, is marked by the disappearance from the College Lists of the Fourth School of Rudiments, which was transferred to the new establishment. Mr. Talbot not only was founder of Esquerchin, but he was its first President and continued to direct it for some years, while still maintaining close connection with Douay.

But while he was thus busy in his scholastic interests, he was marked in England as a man to be employed in a higher office. As early as 1756, when he was only thirty years old, his name was one of the three submitted to Rome by Bishop York, V.A., of the Western District, who wished to have a Coadjutor Bishop appointed. Dr. Christopher

Stonor, who was then the Roman Agent of the Vicars-Apostolic, says that there were several in the Congregation of Propaganda who would have given Mr. Talbot the preference, "but there were one or two persons, too respectable to be named, who insisted upon having one of the Vicars-Apostolic a Regular," hence Dr. Charles Walmesley, a Benedictine, afterwards known as "the old lion of Rama," was appointed.

Three years later the Vicar-Apostolic of the Midland District made a determined effort to secure him as Coadjutor. Bishop Hornyold, who was in feeble health, finding that James Talbot would not yield to his entreaties, took the most urgent steps he could think of to overcome his scruples. He wrote to the Pope, he wrote to Prince Charles Edward (still regarded by many, in spite of the failure of the '45, as Charles III., King of England), he wrote to Charles Edward's brother, the Cardinal Duke of York. His petition to the Pope was particularly emphatic, he begged His Holiness to order Mr. Talbot, by a severe command in virtue of obedience, not to refuse this burden laid upon him by God." But the business could not get itself carried through, and Bishop Hornyold had perforce to wait for a coadjutor till 1766, when he obtained the appointment —after much further trouble, largely due to humility —of Mr. Talbot's brother Thomas.

But where the Western and Midland Districts had failed, the London District, through its Vicar-Apostolic, Bishop Challoner, succeeded. In December, 1758, the aged Bishop Petre died and was succeeded by the great bishop who had been his coadjutor for nearly twenty years. But in the early days of his rule as Vicar-Apostolic, Dr. Challoner was struck down by the first of three severe illnesses which attacked him during his episcopate. Lying at death's door he hurriedly appealed to Rome for a coadjutor. His petition was granted, and on February 13, 1759, James Talbot was elected by Propaganda. Five days later, February 18th, his election was confirmed by Pope Benedict XIV., whose brief appointed him Bishop of Birtha (or Byrthan), with right of succession to the London

District. He is therein described as "brother to the Earl of Shrewsbury of distinguished and ancient nobility, endowed with an ample patrimony so that he can sustain the dignity and succour the poor."

In those days it was not possible, without great inconvenience, for three bishops to meet together, so that bishops-elect were usually, with special leave, consecrated by a bishop assisted by two priests. Bishop Challoner himself had been consecrated in this manner. In the case, however, of Mr. Talbot, a second Bishop, Dr. Francis Petre, V.A., of the Northern District, was able to be present.

Bishop Challoner, though still very weak, was recovered sufficiently to be able to perform the ceremony, which took place on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1759.

For the next twenty-two years Bishop Talbot lived and worked in London as Coadjutor-Bishop to Dr. Challoner. The flock numbered about 25,000, but this number slowly diminished as the years rolled on. It must be remembered too that these Catholics were scattered over ten shires embracing the whole of the South of England. London claimed about 20,000 of these, while the most Catholic county was Hampshire with over one thousand Catholics. The number of priests varied, but was usually between 120 and 140, half of whom, roughly speaking, were seculars. About two-thirds of these were to be found in London, though as yet there were no chapels or regular stations. Mass was said in obscure taverns with every precaution of watchword and disguise.

A graphic picture has been recorded for us by Mrs. Marlow Sidney of the way in which Mass was celebrated on a particular occasion about the year 1771. "We started from our lodgings at five in the morning," she says, "to be present for the first time at a Catholic religious service, or at prayers, as it was generally called, for the word Mass was scarcely ever used in conversation. We arrived at a public-house in some back street near the house in which Mr. Horne resided. I felt rather frightened seeing some very rough looking poor people, as we passed through the entrance, though all were very quiet.

These people, I was told, were Irish workmen, who, with a few women, were assembled on that Sunday morning to hear prayers when they could be admitted. We hurried past them, but I could not help clinging to Marlow, having a sort of undefined fear of what was going to happen, for I had no inclination to laugh then. We mounted higher and higher escorted by a young man whom Marlow had seen at the priest's house, who had come forward to conduct us. When we arrived at the top, the door of a garret was unlocked, and, as we entered, we saw at the farthest end what seemed a high table, or long chest of drawers, with the back turned towards us. A piece of carpet was spread before it by the young man, who, after he had placed a few chairs and cushions in order, pointed out to us our seats. In a few minutes the door opened, and the Venerable Dr. Challoner, accompanied by Mr. Horne and another priest, entered the garret, the door of which was secured inside by the assistant, who then proceeded to unlock some drawers behind what, I found, was to be used as an altar, and take out the vestments and other things requisite for the church service. . . . Soon after, we heard the door-key turned and several rough footsteps entered the garret, some gentle taps and words were exchanged between a powerful-looking Irishman, who kept his post close to it, and those outside, which were passwords of admission. The key was again turned each time any one entered, and just before the Bishop vested himself to say Mass, bolts were drawn also, and no one else could pass into the garret. In the meanwhile the young man in attendance had prepared all that was required for Mass, taken from behind what was used as the altar, which was covered with a white linen cloth. A crucifix and two lighted candles were placed on it and in the front was suspended a piece of satin damask, in the centre of which was a cross in gold lace. . . . When all was over, and I was praying to God to increase my faith, I heard the door-key turn once more, and all the rough footsteps leaving the garret. The Bishop, having unvested, remained kneeling before us while the people de-

parted. The two Priests, assisted by the young man in attendance, replaced the vestments, candlesticks, and all that was used at the Mass, behind the Altar, locking all up carefully, and leaving the garret an ordinary one in appearance as before."

The precautions described by Mrs. Sidney were rendered more than ever necessary, during the few years which followed, owing to the persecution raised by the common informer, John Payne, popularly known as the "Protestant Carpenter," who was anxious to earn the reward of £100 which the law offered to any one who procured the conviction of a Catholic priest. Payne's early career and methods were vividly described by Mr. Counsellor Cox in the trial of Rev. J. Webb. "This Payne," he said, "has been all his life a Common Informer, who makes it his business to make people miserable. Some time ago he used to go about on Sundays among those poor women who sell gingerbread nuts and such like things to get a trifle for their poor starving children at home ; since by their hard labour all the week they were not able to raise sufficient to make a Sunday's dinner. These poor people he took up, fined and distressed them and their poor innocent children in the most inhuman and barbarous manner possible. . . . Next he attacked another set of people still more innocent ; I mean the poor beggars : these also he took up, sent them to Bridewell and such like places. . . . Thus he has gone on many years with several other poor innocent people watching all opportunities to put them to trouble, to distress the distressed and make them still more miserable." This was the man who in 1765 began to attack the priests of London. His method, as described by Rev. Mr. Barnard, afterwards Vicar-General to Bishop Challoner, was simple. He made it his business to discover the places where Catholics used to meet for Mass, then he "for several Sundays frequented them, as if he himself had been one of the faithful ; and by commending the elegance of the sermons of the preachers and the decency and devotion with which others assisted at the altar, he had from some unthinking

Catholics fished out the names of most of the clergy: he had dogged them from the chapels to their own houses; . . . and when his diabolical scheme was ripe for execution he applied to Alderman Stephenson, the then Lord Mayor of London, for warrants to apprehend some of the Catholics." Here, meeting with difficulties on one side and another, he at length agreed for ten guineas to let the matter drop. His idea of letting the matter drop was to cease his proceedings before the Lord Mayor in order to indict his victims at the Old Bailey.

This began a veritable persecution. From 1765 to 1772 Bishop Challoner and his priests were harassed from week to week by the proceedings of this scoundrel. Meeting places were raided, Priests were arrested, bail was required and had to be forthcoming, trials were impending, or some new vexation was constantly afflicting Bishop Challoner and his coadjutor. At last Payne attacked Bishop Challoner himself. This failed, but at length he successfully prosecuted Rev. John Baptist Moloney, who was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for life. Emboldened by this success Payne instituted proceedings against four London priests, Messrs. Dillon, Barnewall, de Magallaens, and Webb. It was on the trial of the last named that Lord Chief Justice Mansfield laid down the principle which not only acquitted Mr. Webb but prevented further convictions under the statute. "All the twelve Judges have agreed that before any man can be proceeded against, so as to convict him, it is first necessary that he be proved to be a priest. . . . It is not sufficient to convict a person on those statutes for saying Mass unless he is first proved to be a priest, therefore the issue of the whole does not depend upon the saying Mass." In vain counsel for the Crown, Sir Fletcher Norton, urged that if this were so, it would be impossible to prove any man a priest without going to the colleges and seminaries abroad and perhaps, he movingly added, "to Rome and even to the Pope himself."

The Judge was firm, and the Jury acquitted the prisoner.

*

It was during the heat of this persecution that Bishop Talbot, harassed and pursued as he was, found time to establish the school which later on was to develop into St. Edmund's College.

The school which Bishop Challoner had founded in 1753 to take the place of Twyford was in 1767 driven from Standon Lordship by a notice to quit from the new landlord, Mr. R. Plumer, who had bought the estate from the Aston family. After some difficulty in finding a new home, the headmaster, Rev. R. Kendal, moved the school to a house in the village of Hare Street, but the house was too small, the numbers went down, and the school was threatened with extinction.

At this time Bishop Talbot, with his ever keen interest in education, came to the rescue. Having founded the school at Esquerchin out of his own means, he now came forward in the same generous spirit to find a new home for Bishop Challoner's School. He found two places in Hertfordshire not far from Hare Street : one known as Hammel's Park, the other an old manor-house at Old Hall Green, sometimes called Odey Green.

He finally fixed on the latter estate and Standon School became "Old Hall Green Academy." The Hall itself, which still stands as the "Old College," was, even then, more than 120 years old, having been built during the Civil Wars, about the year 1640. Behind it lay a garden and orchard of eight acres. Bishop Talbot rented the Hall for two years, but finding it was suitable for the purpose he decided in 1771 to buy it outright. Thus Catholics acquired the estate which a quarter of a century later was to receive the refugees from Douay, and to become one of the centres of Catholic life and activity.

We quote from Mgr. Ward's *History of St. Edmund's College* the following account of the legal transfer of the property :—

"In effecting the purchase, he had recourse to an expedient not unusual in the time of the Penal Laws. A Catholic was unable to acquire land validly by purchase, and it was therefore advisable, as a matter

of precaution, to find a friend to act as an intermediary. Mr. John Hollingworth, a surveyor or land agent at Puckeridge, undertook to do so. The estate was accordingly sold to him, July 11, 1771. The following day he, in turn, sold it to Bishop Talbot. The price in each case was £800, and the total quantity of land a little more than twenty acres. The deeds having been signed, it was also necessary, in order to effect the transfer, for Bishop Talbot to appear before the Manor Court, as Mr. Hollingworth had already done, the property being copyhold. Again as a matter of prudence, this formality was postponed, and Mr. Hollingworth therefore remained the ostensible owner; for which reason, no doubt, he describes himself in his own purchase deeds as a schoolmaster. By this artifice the double land tax, which was still often levied from Catholic owners, was evaded. Matters were complicated three years later by the death of Mr. Hollingworth, but no serious difficulty resulted. The Court sat on July 18, 1775, when Bishop Talbot himself appeared and produced the deeds of purchase which were duly recognised, and he was formally put in possession." [1]

But at the very time that Bishop Talbot was unconsciously preparing a refuge for the Douay fugitives, he was placed in the greatest danger and found himself, as Burke said, "hauled to the bar of the Old Bailey among common felons," to stand his trial for being a priest, or rather "for exercising part of the office and function of a Popish Bishop against the Statute."

Three times before, he had been indicted by the Protestant Carpenter, but each time the indictment had failed through technical errors. At length in the early part of 1771 a fourth indictment proved successful, and the Bishop was brought to trial at the Old Bailey on February 27th.

As fortunately a report of the evidence has been preserved, we can form a fairly complete idea of the trial, although the speeches both for prosecution and

[1] The freehold of the estate was acquired some fifteen years later.

defence, as well as the summing up of the Judge, have not been recorded.

From the outset of the case, Payne appears to have had his doubts of a successful issue, as he at once offered to drop the prosecution if Bishop Talbot would close the Mass-houses in Rope-maker's Alley and White's Alley, Moorfields. The Judge declined to permit such an offer, and Payne proceeded to give evidence. "At the time that Sir William Stephenson was Lord Mayor of the City I was then an officer; and hearing of two Mass-houses in the City, Mr. Gates and I went together into Rope-maker's Alley; there is a Mass-house there that will hold, I believe, a thousand people.[1]

"It was on the second of June, 1765; I saw this gentleman dressed, I think it was in white, with a Cross on his back, and I believe another on his breast, with a mitre on his head."

Here the prosecutor's evidence was successfully interrupted by the prisoner's counsel on the ground that events that occurred in 1765 could have nothing to do with the offence, which the indictment alleged to have taken place on June 10, 1770.

The next witness was a creature of Payne's, one Robert Saunders. In his evidence he said, "Mr. Payne asked me to go to that place; he said Bishop Talbot was to preach: he gave me a particular description of his person, as a man well advanced in years and a meagre, thin countenance, and that he was to have a mitre on his head; it was in White's Alley. Moorfields; it was a very large room fitted up for public worship; a person said Mass that day, whose name they told me was Wheeler: I do not know him if I saw him, the robes make such a difference in their appearance.

Q. Who did you say preached?

Saunders. This person preached; when I came out there were a great number of people there besides their own; they said that was Bishop Talbot; they told me so next day.

[1] Any reader used to Mr. Payne's manner of giving evidence, as reported in other trials, will receive his statements with caution.

Q. How was the person dressed that preached?

Saunders. In a white robe.

Q. What were the particulars?

Saunders. He had a cap on when he came in, but he took it off.

Q. What was the cap?

Saunders. A blackish cap.

Q. Did he put anything else on?

Saunders. Nothing then, but preached.

Q. Did you see him at any other time?

Saunders. Yes, at two other times, June the tenth; it was the same person, he preached and catechized three young children.

Q. Was that at the same place?

Saunders. Yes.

Q. How was he dressed then?

Saunders. In the same manner.

Q. Did you see anything on his head then?

Saunders. No, nothing as I remember then.

Q. Was anything else done?

Saunders. I understand he confirmed three children: but I am told since that it was only catechizing them; I do not know from my own knowledge.

Q. Was there any particular ceremony used with these children?

Saunders. After catechizing of them he laid his hands on their heads and repeated some benedictions.

Q. Was there any Mass that day?

Saunders. Yes.

Q. Who said Mass?

Saunders. One Mr. Dillon.

Q. Did Talbot say Mass?

Saunders. No, this was in the afternoon.

* * * * *

Q. Did you see anything else done?

Saunders. No nothing else whatever, only there was one thing last Thursday. I met a person who is either a brewer's clerk or a cooper, who endeavoured to frighten me from coming here.

The Judge. You must not tell us anything of any conversation that passed elsewhere. Did anybody else say Mass besides Dillon?

Saunders. Yes, one Fowler.

Q. Did Mr. Talbot say Mass on the 10th of June : did you at any of these days hear Mr. Talbot say Mass ?

Saunders. The person called Talbot said Mass one day.

* * * * *

Q. Did he administer the Sacrament any time ?

Saunders. They administered the Sacrament to several people ; the person called Talbot was one of them.

* * * * *

Q. Did he administer the Sacrament ?

Saunders. Yes.

Q. After what form ?

Saunders. After the Jewish Ritual.

Q. Look about and see if you can see the person ?

Saunders. I do not see any such person here ; the person was far advanced in years that I saw : I do not see any such person.

Q. You have produced a paper you made at the time : I suppose you took a minute of all that passed at the time ?

Saunders. Not particularly.

Q. Did you omit anything ?

Saunders. It was not in my power to remember everything that was said.

Q. You have said one, two, and three Sundays ?

Saunders. June 7th one Wheeler said Mass : the person called Bishop Talbot preached on those words, *My sheep hear my voice.* June the 10th one Dillon said Mass, and Bishop Talbot preached, and either catechized or confirmed.

* * * * *

Q. What time was it you saw him ?

Saunders. It was in the afternoon he preached ; I believe all the times was afternoon : no, one was in the forenoon, from eleven to one ; in the afternoon from three to five.

Q. Have you been there often ?

Saunders. I have been there many years ago.

Q. Whether you ever knew Mass, except on one particular day in the year, last longer than 12 o'clock ?

Saunders. No I never did.

Q. You know this was Trinity Sunday ?

Saunders. Yes.

Q. I am pretty sure Mass is not quite finished about ten minutes before twelve ; what time might it begin ?

Saunders. About eleven ; it takes up generally between forty and fifty minutes.

Q. What time did preaching begin in the afternoon ?

Saunders. I believe it might be some little matter after three, and then Vespers are said, which is done about a quarter perhaps before five.

Q. By whose orders did you go ?

Saunders. It was by Mr. Payne's desire I went.

Q. What had he to do in this matter ?

Saunders. I was, and am, under pecuniary obligations to him.

Q. What has that to do with your going to enquire after these Catholics ?

Saunders. Because in consequence of my obligations I was under to him, I could not deny anything he asked me."

This closed the ineffective evidence of Saunders.

Then came a string of witnesses, one Thomson, Thomas Goddard, William Patman, Mary Brown, George Hancock, Eustace Molyner, who one and all denied any knowledge of Mr. Talbot. The climax was reached with a witness named Emmanuel Roderie. In reply to the question "Do you know Mr. Talbot ?" he, at first, said, "I do not understand English," but on the question being repeated, he answered, "If I see him, I know him." When asked, "What is his Christian name ?" he replied, somewhat inconsequently, "I do not know no more than Mr. Talbot ; I am a Portuguese." When, as a last resort, he was asked the leading question, "Do you know whether Mr. Talbot is a Popish Bishop or not ?" and he replied, "I do not know," it seems to have been too much for the prosecution. Counsel for the Crown, addressing the Judge, in desperation, said, "My Lord, we despair of being able to make out the charge against the Defendant."

The reporter closes his account with the one word "Acquitted."

It was the last trial of a Catholic priest in England for the crime of his office. Douay, having given the first of the martyrs, gave the last of the confessors.

But though free from this danger the Bishop was not exempt from further alarms. In the Museum at St. Edmund's College is a letter addressed to "Lord Bishop Talbot, at his School, Odey Green, near Puckeridge, Hertfordshire."

It reads as follows :—

"My Lord Bishop,

"A friend to the Roman Catholicks begs leave to inform your Lordship that the number of Roman Catholick Schools which of late have been set up in this nation have given cause of complaint, and there are several informations lodged which are supposed to take place soon. Among the rest your Lordship and two or three chaplains at Odey Green, near Puckeridge in Hertfordshire. Your Lordship is left to make what use you please of this friendly admonition, but it's great pity you could not be satisfied with one or two schools which have always been winked at, without drawing on yourselves the just odium of all by establishing Popish Seminaries all over the kingdom. Real charity has induced me to give you this intelligence, begging you would take care of yourself not only in the country, but also in London, where diligent search will soon be made for you.

"Doctor's Commons, March y^e^ 8, 1775."

There is nothing to show whether the Bishop took any precautions in consequence of this letter or whether anything came of the informations. Three years later the whole spy-system came to an end, when the Relief Act of 1778, besides improving the condition of Catholics in other ways, repealed the clauses of the Act which entitled informers to a reward. From that time no more informations were laid.

Catholics, however, had to pay the price of this

Relief Act by undergoing the storm of bigotry which culminated in the Gordon Riots, with their attendant horrors. The venerable Bishop Challoner, though he survived the outburst by six months, never recovered from the disheartening ruin that in a few hours fell on the Catholics of London. In January, 1781, he died, and Bishop Talbot was called to the charge of the London District. In one respect only was his jurisdiction less extensive than that of his predecessors. The American Declaration of Independence had resulted in the formation of an American hierarchy, and therefore the Vicar-Apostolic of the London District, whose episcopal jurisdiction had previously extended over the British Colonies in America, was now relieved of that additional responsibility.

For nine years more Bishop Talbot worked alone as Vicar-Apostolic. During this time he lived for the most part in Hammersmith, at that time a village two or three miles out of London.

There was at Hammersmith a sort of settlement of Catholics. This had existed from the time of Catharine of Braganza, Queen of Charles II., who had a manor there. On this manor she established a community of nuns from Munich, thus opening the first convent founded in England since the days of Elizabeth. The nuns, who of course were not able to wear the religious habit, but had to be content with the secret observance of their rule, conducted a school for young ladies, an arrangement which masked the real character of the community. This disguised convent, which lasted during the whole of the eighteenth century, occupied three houses adjoining Cupola House, the country seat of the Portuguese Ambassador.[1] Thus the Embassy Chapel, tolerated by law, and the convent school formed a nucleus

[1] The community died out soon after Bishop Talbot's death, and the Convent was in 1795 handed over to the Benedictine Nuns who were expelled from Dunkirk during the French Revolution. At length Cupola House was acquired by Cardinal Manning as his new foundation. St. Thomas's Seminary and the house itself was pulled down to make room for the large building he erected for that purpose, but which is now the Convent of the Sacred Heart.

round which Catholics gathered. So numerous a class were they, that in the register of burials at the parish church of Hammersmith Catholic names are distinguished by a small cross.

During Bishop Challoner's time another school for girls of a poorer station had been founded on Brook Green by Mrs. Carpue, and tradition still points out a room in a house on Brook Green in which Bishop Talbot used to say Mass.

The years of Bishop Talbot's episcopate were not eventful, though clouds were gathering which betokened trouble in the future. Bishop Challoner, before his death, had prophesied that the attitude adopted by the leaders of the Catholic laity towards the Bishops and Clergy would lead to future troubles and probably the falling away of many from their faith.

This prophecy began to fulfil itself in the action of the Catholic Committee, a body of Catholic gentlemen originally elected to further the passing of the Relief Act in 1778. This Committee developed into a body which, under the guise of promoting Catholic affairs, began to interfere with the ecclesiastical government of the Church. In 1786 Bishop Talbot, writing to his brother on the action of the Committee in proposing a doctrinal test chosen by themselves, says, "What will be the event I know not; but this I know, that some there are who want to put us in leading strings and themselves to hold them."

This shows that though he had acted in concert with the Committee as long as possible, he at length was beginning to perceive that they were proceeding to lengths to which the clergy could not in conscience go.

In 1788 the Bishop wrote to his brother complaining that he had been excluded from a meeting of Catholics on public business, "although I had some title as a gentleman and could have given some useful information."[1]

[1] In the same year his name was added to the Committee as one of three "representatives of the Clergy." He accepted the nomination, hoping to restrain his colleagues, a hope which was never realized.

At length the matter was brought to a head by the action of the Committee, who had opened negotiations with Pitt, the Prime Minister, for the further relief of English Catholics. To obtain this relief they alleged that Catholics must be prepared to take an oath, the terms of which they themselves settled.

Bishop Talbot, having considered the terms of the oath, convened a meeting of the Vicars-Apostolic at his house at Hammersmith. At this meeting, which took place on October 19, 1789, there were present the four Vicars-Apostolic, with two other bishops and two priests, Bannister and Milner. It resulted in a formal and public condemnation of the Oath, which led to a long and fierce struggle between the Vicars-Apostolic and the Catholic Committee.

But in this struggle Bishop Talbot was to play no part. Three months after the Hammersmith meeting he lay at the point of death. While on his death-bed he told his friend Rev. John Lindow that, if he recovered, he would write against the Committee: but his life-work was ended, and on January 26th he passed away, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

As Catholics were not then allowed to bury their dead with the rites of the Church, Bishop Talbot was laid to rest with the Anglican form, in the parish church of Hammersmith, in the vault of Mr. Baynard, close to the church tower near the south door of the church.

Interesting light is thrown on the Bishop's character by the instructions which he left to his brother, Bishop Thomas, who was his executor. After bequests to Douay, Valladolid, Lisbon, St. Omers, and his own clergy, he continues "To my successor if a secular priest, I leave all that was left to me by my predecessor; as also my little farm and all my property in Herts; as also all my furniture, books, papers and other effects in Town or in Hammersmith. But in case my successor be a regular, the whole of this article is to devolve to our Chapter to be managed by them till a secular bishop succeeds. The rest, as you can't want it, I leave to the poor, as witness my hand: James Talbot."

In Hammersmith Churchyard the remains of

Bishop Talbot lay for over a hundred years. The countrified old church, which had been consecrated by Archbishop Laud in 1631, was pulled down in 1882 to make way for the present building, and on that occasion, though there was probably some interference with the Baynard vault, yet Dr. Talbot's coffin was not exhumed.

Some years later, however, the translation of the episcopal remains from Moorfields suggested the fitness of St. Edmund's College as a resting-place for the Vicars-Apostolic, whose special creation it was. Naturally it was at once felt that of all others, Bishop Talbot, who was the first founder of that home of Catholic education, should find his last resting-place there.

After the necessary legal proceedings before the Bishop of London's Court, the consent of the Home Secretary was without difficulty obtained, and at length, early in 1901, the work of exhumation was begun.

But an unforeseen difficulty arose. The Baynard vault had been encroached upon by later building and the contents of the vault had been disturbed, but those to whom the work had been entrusted, nothing daunted, continued excavating in the neighbourhood of the vault and on the third day came upon a leaden coffin bearing a crucifix, and the inscription—

"The Honbl. and Rt. Revd. James Talbot, Lord Bishop of Birtha, V.A., Obiit 26th January, 1790, Ætat. 63."

The outer coffin had entirely perished, but the leaden shell had preserved the bones of the venerable Bishop intact.

Shortly afterwards the leaden coffin, enclosed in an outer case of oak, was removed to St. Edmund's College. There, surmounted by a mitre and the chalice and paten, specially apt symbols of this confessor of the Faith, it lay in state in the centre of the choir while Vespers for the Dead, Dirge and Solemn Mass of Requiem, were sung: and so with full Catholic rites the Good Bishop Talbot was laid to rest in that earth which he had given to the service of the Church.

THE CARMELITES OF COMPIÈGNE

(1793–1795)

BY THE

COMTESSE DE COURSON

LONDON

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY

69 SOUTHWARK BRIDGE ROAD, S.E.

1902

DECLARATION OF THE AUTHOR.

In obedience to the Decrees of Holy Church, I hereby declare that in using such terms as *martyr, saint, miracle, prophecy*, or such like, it is in no way intended to anticipate the judgement of the Holy Apostolic See in its decisions regarding any persons treated of in these pages.

THE CARMELITES OF COMPIÈGNE[1]

(1793–1795)

BY THE COMTESSE DE COURSON

AMONG the servants of God whose future canonization is, at the present moment, under examination at Rome, are sixteen Carmelite nuns who were executed in Paris on the 17th of July, 1794.

A short sketch of the holy lives and brave death of these devoted women may, under the circumstances, prove of interest. Instances of heroism were not wanting among the female victims of the Reign of Terror: delicately reared ladies, women of the people, mere girls, displayed a fortitude equal to that of their fathers and husbands. But these, although deserving of our warm admiration, cannot, in most cases, aspire to the honours of martyrdom in the strict religious sense of the word, their death, however unjust, being generally the result of their social station or political opinions. The case of the Carmelites is different; for, independently of the unusual holiness of their lives, they were executed solely on account of their religious vocation, of their fidelity to their monastic vows, and, we may add, of their devotion to the Sacred Heart. Hence it is that the proposal to beatify them has been favourably

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received by the Holy See, and that the negotiations on the subject have been carried on with rapidity and ease.

The Convent of Compiègne, where our martyrs were trained to holiness, was founded in 1641 by Elisabeth de Louvencourt, widow of Antoine Trudaine, Treasurer of the Kingdom, and mother of a Carmelite nun. Compiègne, a small town in the Departement de l'Oise, at a short distance to the north of Paris, stands close to the splendid forest of the same name. It possesses a palace where the Bourbon Kings occasionally resided, but whose days of greatest splendour belong to a later period, when the Court of Napoleon III. made Compiègne its autumn residence.

The first nuns of the new convent came from the Carmelite monasteries of Amiens and of Paris. They met with a kind welcome from the Bishop of Soissons, to whose diocese Compiègne then belonged. This bishop was Simon Legras, brother-in-law to Madame Legras, who was St. Vincent of Paul's chief helper in the foundation of the Sisters of Charity. The local authorities likewise showed the new-comers much respect, and before taking possession of their monastery, the nuns were invited to partake of a splendid "collation" at the Hôtel de Ville.

Among the frequent visitors to the convent was Queen Anne of Austria. On one occasion she was accompanied by her son, the boy-king, Louis XIV., who carried a magnificent chalice which he presented to the convent chapel. Marie Leckzinska, the injured consort of Louis XV., on whose brow the crown of France weighed so heavily, was also a friend of the Carmelites. Her daughters inherited her love for the community, and when the youngest, Madame Louise, resolved to enter the Order, it was to the Prioress of Compiègne that she applied to procure her a serge tunic like that worn by the nuns. Until she obtained her father's leave to exchange a court for a cloister, the Princess wore this rough tunic under her costly robes.

When the Revolution of 1789 broke out, the Carmelite Monastery of Compiègne presented a perfect picture of religious fervour and peace. A few years before, in 1780,

according to an established custom, the nuns received the visit of a high ecclesiastical dignitary, Monsieur Rigaud, whose mission it was to inquire into the condition of the community, and, if necessary, to redress grievances and reform abuses. He was so deeply impressed by their fervent spirit, their strict attention to their Rule, their mutual charity and general perfection in all things, that he gave them no other advice but to continue in the same course. All those who, from one cause or another, were brought into contact with the Religious received a similar impression. The venerable Mother Julie Billiart, foundress of the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame, used as a girl to be a frequent visitor at the convent, and, in after-life, she was never weary of telling her own spiritual daughters of the Carmelites of Compiègne and their great holiness. It was thus that unconsciously the future martyrs trained themselves for difficulties and struggles of no common order, to be crowned by a cruel death.

Meantime the political horizon of their country was becoming daily more threatening; by a decree dated February 13, 1790, the Government suppressed all religious houses throughout the kingdom, and, a few months later, in August the civil authorities of Compiègne made an official visit to the community. They solemnly informed the nuns that their chains were broken, their prison doors thrown open, and they might now return to free and happy lives in the world. The Carmelites, one and all, replied that they were neither prisoners nor victims, that their mode of life had been embraced freely and gladly, that they desired no change; on the contrary, that they asked but for the privilege of remaining faithful to the Rule they had willingly chosen. Their spirited answers, breathing a courage worthy of the valiant Spanish Saint, their foundress and mother, have been preserved word for word in the local archives.

Two years more passed by in comparative tranquillity, but on the 14th of September, 1792, they were peremptorily commanded to leave their monastery; the Government having laid violent hands on all religious houses throughout France. They had no alternative but to obey. Sadly and

tearfully they abandoned the cloistered home they loved so well, but their clinging to their Rule was too intense to allow them to renounce it without an effort. Unlike the greater number of nuns, who, when sent adrift upon the world, took refuge with their families and friends, the Carmelites of Compiègne refused to separate. Dividing themselves into three groups, in order to escape attention, they retired to private houses in the quarter of the town close to their old home. Here they continued to observe as closely as possible their former mode of life under the guidance of their Prioress.

St. Teresa's mantle seems to have descended upon this noble woman; brave and prudent, with the courage of a man and the loving heart of a true mother, she worthily discharged the duties of her office in times of peculiar difficulty and danger. Mother Teresa of St. Augustin, called in the world Madeleine Claudine Lidoine, was just forty years old in 1792. She had become a nun at the age of twenty-one, under the affectionate patronage of Madame Louise of France, the Princess-Carmelite of St. Denis, whose religious name she adopted on taking the habit. Her predecessor as Prioress was still alive, and between the two there seems to have existed a close and affectionate union. The ex-Prioress, Mother Henrietta of Jesus, *née* de Croissy, was a great-niece of Colbert, the famous Minister. She entered the Order when only sixteen[1] Queen Marie Leckzinska, who was present at her profession, is reported to have envied her fate, the Carmelite veil seeming to her less heavy upon the brow than the crown matrimonial of France. Mother Teresa of St. Augustin and Mother Henrietta of Jesus may be justly regarded as the leading spirits whose sweet and powerful influence guided the virgin-band of martyrs through the narrow path of suffering to a glorious sacrifice.

Strangely enough, the idea of martyrdom seems to have been familiar to the Prioress; different circumstances contributed to lead her mind to this one absorbing thought.

[1] The Bishop of Amiens, Mgr. de la Motte, introduced her to the Community in these terms: "You may safely receive her, she is an angel upon earth."

Some time before the Revolution one of the lay-sisters of the Monastery of Compiègne had a dream, in which she saw the members of the community clothed in white and holding the palms of martyrdom. This dream was so complete in all its details, so clear, so impressive, that an account of it was written down at the time, and occasionally, when the political horizon of the kingdom grew dark and threatening, the nuns reminded each other of the Sister's vision, and wondered whether it were not a prophecy of the fate that awaited them. In 1792, one day, when absorbed in prayer, the Prioress herself experienced what she took to be a revelation of the tragic destiny that was in store for the community; and, deeply moved, she proposed to her daughters that henceforth they should daily offer up their lives to God for the salvation of their unhappy country. The following year, on the occasion of her feast, the younger Sisters presented Mother Henrietta of Jesus with an emblematic picture, which they had painted, accompanied by some verses, that contained an allusion to the troubles of the times. One of the nuns having remarked that the verses seemed to point to suffering and death at no distant period, Mother Henrietta exclaimed, "Oh, my child, God grant that you may be right!"

That same year, 1793, the Mother Prioress, with the permission of her ecclesiastical superiors, went to Paris to visit her mother, who was just then in deep affliction. The execution of the unfortunate King had taken place, the guillotine was erected on the Place de la Revolution, now the Place de la Concorde, and numerous victims were perishing daily. One day Mother Teresa found herself close to a cart in which were seated a group of prisoners who were being led to execution. The Sister who was with her tried to lead her away. "Oh, Sister," she exclaimed, "let me see how martyrs go to their death!" Two of the victims looked attentively at the nuns, who were standing close to the cart and whose countenances expressed their horror and sympathy. "They seem to tell us that we shall soon follow," said the Sister. "Oh, my child," answered the Prioress, "if God granted us this grace, our happiness would indeed be great!"

About the same time, at Passy, then an outlying suburb of Paris, a young girl of sixteen died in the odour of sanctity. She was attended by Mgr. de Maillé de la Tour Landry, a venerable Bishop, who never left France during the Reign of Terror, and who continued to exercise his sacred ministry under an assumed name and dress and amid a thousand dangers. Suddenly the dying girl opened her eyes wide and clasped her hands. "O Lord," she cried, "the blood of Thy confessors does not satisfy Thee; Thou requirest the blood of virgins!" and to the Bishop's questions she replied that she beheld at that moment a whole community of nuns executed the same day on the scaffold. "These virgins," she added, "wear white mantles; I see palm-branches in their hands and heaven opening to receive them."

One who was present at the scene reported the seer's words to the Mother Prioress; the "white mantle" is, as our readers know, characteristic of the Carmelites. Mother Teresa appeared deeply touched. "I hardly venture to think that it is indeed our community to which God reserves so happy a fate! In spite, however, of my longing wish for martyrdom, may God preserve me from committing the slightest imprudence that might cause pain or harm to any one of my Sisters."

Meantime the future martyrs prepared for their glorious destiny. A holy priest, M. de Lamarche, who died in 1827 at Beauvais, where he was chaplain to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, used often to relate that he acted as confessor to the Carmelites when they were living in concealment at Compiègne. They were accustomed to encourage one another, and to talk of the violent death that probably awaited them as of the supreme happiness they could expect on earth. Only one Sister, who was young and timid, secretly disliked these conversations and owned to her confessor that she much dreaded dying on the scaffold.

"My child," he answered, "when your sisters talk of the guillotine, does it really hurt you?" "No, father." "Now imagine that you are led away to prison, do you suffer tortures?" "No, father." "Well, let us suppose

that you are led before the tribunal and are condemned to death; would your sufferings be unbearable?" "No." "You are told to ascend the scaffold and to bend your head under the knife, is this a torture?" "No, not yet." "Well, when the knife falls, you have hardly time to realize that this is death before you find yourself in Paradise, my child. Are you still afraid?" "No, indeed, father."

A few weeks later this timid Sister died as bravely and willingly as the others.

On her return to Compiègne, the Prioress resumed the government of her scattered flock, and, faithful to the line of conduct she had adopted, she continued to encourage her daughters in the exact observance of the Rule, while, at the same time, she carefully avoided any rash display, and lived with them in the strictest retirement. But even the quiet lives of the Carmelites excited suspicion at an epoch when none were safe. In the spring of 1794 they were accused of practising a "fanatical rule" in secret. On the 21st and 22nd of June the houses in which they lived were searched and their papers and relics seized. Some of the former were considered as most compromising: a hymn to the Sacred Heart, a picture of the same, a copy of the last testament of Louis XVI., a few letters in which occurred the words, "priest," "novena," "scapular"—these documents found in their possession sufficed to stamp them as enemies of the State. They were therefore placed under arrest and conducted to the former Convent of the Visitation of Compiègne, now used as a prison. The community consisted at the time of ten choir nuns, one novice, three lay-sisters, and two *tourières*, or servants.

Five other Religious had formed part of the community at the outbreak of the Revolution: one of these died in February, 1791, and another in October, 1792; the three others, with the permission of the Prioress, had gone to visit their families, where their presence was required, and thus escaped the tragic fate of the rest. One of these absent Sisters, Sister Mary of the Incarnation, who was thirty-three years old in 1794, never consoled herself for the loss of the martyr's crown; for many years she led a life of hardship and unceasing wanderings through France

and Switzerland. In 1823, broken in health and worn out by suffering, she retired to Sens, where the Carmelites had established a convent, and died amongst them in 1836. It was she who, encouraged by Cardinal Villecourt, then Vicar-General of Sens, wrote the first French history of her martyred Sisters.

In the prison of Compiègne the sixteen Religious suffered much from hunger and thirst. They were fed chiefly on bread and water, but the allowance given them was scanty and barely sufficient to keep them alive. Their sweetness and courage, however, remained unchanged, and they gladly accepted all privations as a preparation for the end which they felt was close at hand.

Within the same prison was confined a community of English Benedictine nuns from Cambrai, who are now represented by those of Stanbrook Abbey. Just when the negotiations for the beatification of the martyred Carmelites had been set on foot, an unexpected testimony to their patience and resignation was received from the Abbess of Stanbrook, Lady Gertrude d'Aurillac Dubois, by the Prioress of the Carmel at Compiègne. The historical proofs thus collected were so valuable that the tribunal instituted at Paris for the investigation of the cause transferred itself to Stanbrook from August 28th to September 2nd in 1897. The result was declared successful beyond all expectation. As this testimony ranks first and foremost, it is here our object to make its historical importance known to the English readers who are interested in the cause. As an example of religious sacrifice the story of the Carmelites of Compiègne appeals to all Catholic hearts, but additional interest is attached to their history in English eyes by the circumstances that have made an English community the chief witness of their heroism, the guardian of their memory, and also of their relics. The members of this community being themselves the children of our English martyrs, the memory of the holy victims of the Paris guillotine is sweetly linked through them with that of the noble martyrs whose blood was poured forth on our own soil in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The Benedictine nuns of Cambrai, now of Stanbrook, in

Worcestershire, were the lineal descendants, in the spiritual order, of the martyred Chancellor of England, Blessed Thomas More, whose grandson, Mr. Cresacre More, for the sake of his daughter Helen, better known as Dame Gertrude, became the temporal founder of the Cambrai house. Together with her companions, Helen More crossed the seas to Flanders under the conduct of Dom Leander Jones, monk of the English Congregation of Benedictines, to whom the work of the foundation had been entrusted by his Superior, Dom Rudesind Barlow, brother of Venerable Ambrose Barlow, the martyr.

The postulants, nine in number, assembled at Cambrai in the autumn of 1623, and received the habit there on the 31st of December. Their names, given below, tell of relationship with more than one martyr or families of martyrs.[1]

Three nuns from the English house of Benedictines at Brussels, founded some years previously by Lady Mary Percy, daughter of the martyred Earl of Northumberland, were invited by the monks to come for a time to train the novices. One of these three, who temporarily filled the office of Abbess, was a Gawen—a family well known for its staunch adherence to the ancient Faith; and when, two years after their profession, the Cambrai nuns were able to elect an Abbess from the nine members of their own foundation, their choice fell on Dame Catherine Gascoigne, the worthy daughter of a race of confessors. She governed the community as Abbess for the space of forty years.

The Cambrai nuns seem to have lived up to a high standard of perfection and interior prayer, and their house was commonly called the "Paradise." The solid principles of spiritual life had been well rooted in their midst from the very first by the wise direction of the holy monk, Dom Augustine Baker, who wrote some of his valuable treatises for the special use of the Cambrai community.

[1] Helen More (Dame Gertrude), Margaret Vavasour (Dame Lucy), Ann Morgan (Dame Benedicta), Catherine Gasgoigne (Dame Catherine), Grace More (Dame Agnes) Ann More (Dame Ann), Frances Watson (Dame Mary), Mary Hoskins (Sister Mary, lay-sister). Jane Martin (Sister Martha, lay-sister).

In 1793, although foreigners, they fell victims to the terrible tempest which swept away all the religous institutions of their adopted country.

After enduring many vexations, these Benedictines, twenty-one in number, were arrested on October 18, 1793, and removed from Cambrai to Compiègne. The journey lasted five days, and proved to be a veritable *via dolorosa*. They wore their black habits and veils, travelled in open carts, and were insulted and reviled by the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which they passed. On one occasion the guards who attended them, fearing that they would be torn to pieces, lent them cloaks, and advised them to tie coloured handkerchiefs over their black veils, in order to conceal their religous dress. At last, on October 23rd, the weary English nuns arrived at Compiègne, where they were conducted to a former Visitation Convent that now served as a prison. Here they were treated with great harshness, deprived of the commonest necessaries of life and fed mainly on dry bread and water.[1]

One unexpected joy came to them when two monks of their own Order, Fathers Walker and Higginson, who had been arrested in the chaplain's quarters of the Abbey of Cambrai some days previously to themselves, were transferred to the Compiègne prison, together with Mr. Roper, a friend of the community. Ere long, however, the foul air and scanty food caused a fever to break out among the prisoners, and between January and April, 1794, Father Walker, who was enfeebled by age, and four of the nuns were carried off by illness. God, in His goodness, seems to have singled out the chosen victims from amongst those whose families had most markedly in England furnished martyrs to the gallows, confessors to the Faith, priests and nuns to God's

[1] Our readers may be interested in knowing the names of the Benedictine prisoners. They were the Lady Abbess, Mary Lucy Blyde; Dames Joan Alexander, Frances Sheldon, Louisa Hagan, Anselma Anne, Teresa Walmesley, Anne Joseph Knight, Margaret Burgess, Anne Teresa Partington, Benedict Partington, Bernard Haggerston, Bernard Barnewell, Agnes Robinson, Mary Teresa Shepherd, and Augustine Shepherd. The lay-sisters were Anne Pennington, Mary Anne Lefeuvre, Magdalen Kimberley, Martha Fryer, Scholastica Caton, Joseph Miller.

Church for many generations. They were Dame Anselma Anne, aged seventy-eight, of the ancient Yorkshire family of Frickley and Burghwallis Castle ; Dame Teresa Walmesley, of the Westwood line, and Dame Margaret Burgess, aged seventy-three, both born of staunch Lancashire Catholic families ; and Sister Anne Pennington, a lay-sister of more humble, but not less devoted race in the same county. The latter, in spite of a terrible ulcer in the arm, had rendered indefatigable service to the sick and dying Sisters around her.

Among the surviving nuns is one who deserves special mention, for it is to her accurate account of the events of those years that the Benedictines of Stanbrook and the French Carmelites owe a deep debt of gratitude. This was Dame Anne Teresa Partington, and her manuscript narrative of her own and her Sisters' captivity is among the most carefully prized treasures of the Stanbrook archives.

After relating the hardships suffered by her companions and herself, she goes on to tell how in the month of June of that same year 1794, sixteen Carmelite nuns were brought to the prison and lodged in a room opposite to that occupied by the English Benedictines. We know further, from a letter written some years later by the Lady Abbess, Mary Lucy Blyde, that twice, with much fear and difficulty, she was able to converse with the French nuns, whose stay was brought to an abrupt termination some weeks later.

On the 12th of July orders came to transfer the sixteen Carmelites to Paris. They bade adieu with their usual sweet serenity to the English nuns, who tearfully watched their departure, for in those days the prisoners who were summoned to Paris were considered as already sentenced to the guillotine. Obediently the nuns seated themselves in two rough carts filled with straw, their hands tightly bound behind their backs, and a body of mounted police surrounding them. The journey lasted from the Saturday afternoon to the Sunday morning. Not once were their hands untied, and we may imagine the fatigue and discomfort they endured, as also the fervent prayers that rose from their hearts whilst the carts jogged along the rough country roads in the stillness of the summer night.

We are acquainted with the two leaders of the little band —Mothers Teresa of St Augustine and Henrietta of Jesus. The others were Sisters Charlotte Thouret of the Resurrection and Marie Anne Piedcourt of Jesus Crucified, two aged nuns, who, after showing some signs of terror at the outbreak of the revolution, displayed much tranquil heroism when the peril of their situation became greater.

The sensitive and loving nature of Sister Charlotte of the Resurrection rendered her a special favourite among her Sisters, but it also made her suffer more keenly than they did. The dispersion of the community, the perpetual anxiety in which she lived, the prospect of a violent death seem to have preyed upon her and seriously injured her health. But when the hour of sacrifice came none met it with a calmer brow and sweeter composure than she did. The Sub-Prioress, Mother St. Louis, and the portress, Mother of the Heart of Mary, were younger, and both were exemplary Religious. Sister Euphrasie was singularly intelligent. Queen Marie Lechzinska used to call her "my sweet nun philosopher." Sister Teresa of St. Ignatius was surnamed by her Sisters "the hidden treasure," on account of the rare qualities concealed under a modest and retiring manner.

Sister Julie Louise of Jesus was a widow who in the world had been known as Madame de la Neuville. Her grief when she lost her husband was such that for eighteen months she refused to leave her room and to see even her mother and sister. At last, in 1776, she decided to become a Carmelite, and, by the advice of the Princess Louise of France, she selected the Compiègne Convent. Her apparent coldness and a certain haughtiness of manner alarmed the younger novices, and they decided to make a novena that she might leave the convent. The novice mistress, however, only smiled at their dismay. "Patience," she said; "let God have His way, He knows best;" and by degrees it was noticed that the unpopular novice became sweeter, gentler, and more devoted to others until she won all hearts. When the hour of peril came she proved herself a heroine, for she was naturally timid and the prospects of a violent death terrified her, but she steadily refused to

separate from the community, and her courage, when it was put to the test, equalled that of her religious Sisters.

Sister Marie Henriette was one of the most interesting of the group. She was just thirty-two and very lovely. Her family name was Annette Pelras, and she was born in the South of France, of parents remarkable for their piety: out of her eight brothers and sisters five became priests or nuns. Her courage was great, and throughout her imprisonment she displayed great presence of mind and an ardent enthusiasm, characteristic of her warm southern blood.

Younger than Sister Marie Henriette was Marie Jeanne Meunier, Sister Constance, who was only twenty-eight and still a novice. There were also three lay-sisters—Sister Mary of the Holy Ghost, Sister Saint Martha, and Sister Francis Xavier. Of these the last mentioned was under thirty and had made her vows at the beginning of the Revolution. Before allowing her to bind herself by solemn promises the Prioress warned her that evil days were at hand for Religious Orders in France; she answered simply, "You may be quite easy about me, Mother. If only I am allowed to make my vows and to dedicate myself to God, I shall be quite happy whatever happens." To these fourteen Religious we must add the two faithful *tourières*, Louise and Thérèse Soiron, who, although not bound by vows, considered themselves as belonging to the community. In happier days they had been employed outside the enclosure as the messengers of the convent; when evil times came they cast their lot in with that of the nuns, and refused to leave them.

Such were the sixteen victims who, during that summer night, travelled slowly and painfully from Compiègne to Paris. On arriving they were conducted to the Conciergerie, and ordered to alight. Their hands were still tightly bound, and Sister Charlotte, who was seventy-nine years of age and very infirm, endeavoured in vain to obey. Her cramped limbs could not move, and, her companions with their hands bound behind their backs being powerless to help her, one of the guards seized and flung her out of the cart on to the pavement of the court,

where she fell bruised and bleeding. When she was raised up she gently said, "I am not angry with you, but very glad that you did not kill me. I should have been deprived of the glory and happiness of martyrdom, which my Sisters and I hope for." Another nun, aged eighty, was equally forgiving: "How can we be angry with those deluded men," she used to say, "since they are going to open for us the gates of heaven?"

The prison of the Conciergerie, whose dark towers still rise on the left bank of the Seine, was filled with prisoners of every age and station. The Revolutionary tribunal held its sittings in the adjoining building, and it was to the Conciergerie that victims were brought from the other prisons, in order to be judged, condemned, and executed. To be sent to the Conciergerie during the Reign of Terror meant to be sent to the guillotine, and many illustrious victims had crossed its fatal threshold never to return when, in their turn, the Carmelites entered its gloomy precincts. In the previous month of October, Queen Marie Antoinette, after long weeks of agony, spent in one of its narrow, dark, and damp dungeons, had gone forth to die. A few months later, in May, her sister-in-law, the Princess Elisabeth, had passed through it on her way to death: brave, sweet, patient to the last, a true daughter of St. Louis. Among the motley crowd of victims that filled the prison in daily expectation of death, a holy priest, Monsieur Emery, the future Superior of the Sulpicians, contrived to exercise his ministry; many were the souls whom he prepared for eternity and reconciled with the God whom perchance they had forgotten.

Our sixteen Religious made but a short stay within this famous prison. They arrived on the morning of Sunday, the 13th of July, and were judged and executed on Thursday, the 17th. We know, however, that during those four days their sweetness, patience, and submission won the hearts of their fellow-prisoners; for one of these, a vine-grower from Orleans, named Blot, happily survived the Reign of Terror, and from him many interesting details were handed down to Sister Mary of the Incarnation, the first biographer of the martyred Religious. Blot, who was

imprisoned for having assisted a priest to escape, was employed by the jailers to help them in their attendance on the prisoners, and he was thus brought into contact with the Carmelites, for whom he professed a deep veneration, and to whose prayers he attributed his escape from death. He used to relate that these "holy ladies," as he called the nuns, asked him for a little burnt wood or charcoal and a scrap of paper, in order to write down a hymn composed by the Prioress to the tune of the "Marseillaise." A copy of this hymn has been preserved; it has no pretensions to literary merit, but breathes an ardent love of God and a spirit of chivalrous generosity. Thus, in prayer and preparation for death, the sixteen Carmelites spent their last days on earth. They had no illusions as to the fate that awaited them; every day they saw their fellow-prisoners hurried away in groups of thirty and forty to the Revolutionary tribunal, and thence, the same day, to the guillotine. As a rule, the prisoners were barely informed of the accusations brought forward against them—accusations so vague, so improbable, in many cases so absurd, that it was impossible, even if it had been permitted, to refute them. In the space of fifty-seven days thirteen hundred and sixty-six executions took place.

On the 17th of July, about ten in the morning, they were summoned to appear before the Revolutionary tribunal, which, as has been said, held its sittings in the building adjoining the Conciergerie. Eighteen other prisoners were tried at the same time as the Carmelites. The latter were accused of having conspired against the Republic, and of having, in defiance of the new laws, continued to observe their "fanatical rule of life." As proofs in support of these charges, it was asserted that a hymn to the Sacred Heart, a picture of the same, a portrait of the late King, and other seditious emblems had been found in their possession, together with letters from *emigré* priests, and firearms, evidently intended for the use of the enemies of the Republic.

To this last accusation, which had not a shadow of foundation, the Mother Prioress answered by pointing to the crucifix she carried in her hand: "These are the only

weapons that were ever brought into our house," she said, "and I defy you to prove that we ever possessed others." To the accusation that letters had been discovered addressed to the community by the former chaplain, then in exile, Mother Teresa replied with equal good sense and generosity, first, that these letters, treating of purely spiritual matters, could not be looked upon as dangerous for the safety of the Republic; secondly, that the nuns not being allowed to correspond even with their relations without the permission of their Prioress, she alone could in justice be considered as responsible for the letters, if their existence was an offence. "If you require a victim," she added, "it is I alone whom you must punish, the others are innocent." "They are your accomplices," was the answer. The Prioress then endeavoured to save the two poor servants, whom their love for the community exposed to death, and who were accused of having posted the compromising letters. "They knew nothing of the contents of the letters," she urged, "and being servants what could they do but obey orders, without inquiry or remonstrance?"

Sister Marie Henriette showed no less courage; hearing that they were charged with fanaticism she interrupted the public accuser and called upon him to explain his meaning. He replied that by "fanaticism" he meant their obstinate clinging to the ancient faith. "Oh, my Sisters," exclaimed the warm-hearted daughter of the south, "you hear what he says; we are accused and shall be condemned on account of our fidelity to God! What happiness is ours, we are to die for God's sake!"

As may be imagined, a sentence of death followed this mock trial, and the execution was to take place within twenty-four hours. They heard the verdict with joy; their eyes were raised to heaven, and a fervent prayer of thanksgiving burst from their lips. Only one of the servants, Thérèse Soiron, who until then had shown great courage, suddenly fainted away. But on coming to her senses she expressed her sorrow for this momentary weakness, which was doubtless due to bodily weakness rather than to fear. By a refinement of cruelty the revolutionists of 1793 were accustomed to deprive their victims of food during their

trial, in order to weaken their strength and courage. Hence, when, at midday, the Carmelites returned from the tribunal to their prison, they were still fasting, and the Prioress, anxious to give her daughters all the assistance in her power, sold a pelisse she still possessed to buy some food. She made the nuns eat heartily of this slight repast, encouraging them meanwhile with her loving and generous heart and heroic spirit. "They seemed," said their fellow-prisoner, Blot, "as if they were going to a feast; they congratulated one another, and seemed impatient to die." This honest vine-grower could not restrain his tears at the sight, and he relates how the Carmelites comforted him: "Why do you weep over us?" they said; "you should rather be glad to see that our sufferings are nearly at an end. Ask Almighty God and the Blessed Virgin to help us; we promise you not to forget you when we reach heaven." "I said good-bye to them," adds Blot, "when they got into the carts; their faces are still so deeply engraved in my memory that I can describe each one of them."

After finishing the meal which their mother's vigilant love had provided, the nuns knelt down and began to recite the Office of the Dead, and they were thus engaged when the prison door opened and they were summoned to execution.

They rose from their knees, put on the white mantles they had brought with them from Compiègne, and thus clothed in the livery of the Order they loved so well went forth as calm, as sweet, as gentle, as recollected as when they paced the tranquil cloisters of their old home in bygone days! The carts were waiting in the court of the prison; the nuns seated themselves, their hands tied behind their backs; and the mournful procession began its journey from the prison of the Conciergerie to the Place du Trône, now called the Place de la Nation, at the eastern extremity of Paris.

At the beginning of the Revolution, when the guillotine was first erected, the public executions took place in front of the Tuileries gardens on the "place," now called the Place de la Concorde, which was then known as the Place de la Revolution. Here the unfortunate Louis XVI., his

Queen, the Princess Elisabeth, and countless other victims were beheaded, but, horrible to relate, the quantity of blood that was shed on the spot made the approach almost impossible, so that the inhabitants of the neighbouring houses remonstrated, and the hideous guillotine was transferred to the Place du Trône in June, 1794. There it was in use during six weeks—that is, till the fall of Robespierre, July 27th—but during this short space of time more than thirteen hundred persons were executed.

When the carts began their journey through the busy Paris streets the nuns entoned the *Miserere*, then the *Salve Regina*, lastly the *Te Deum*. Crowds of people were assembled to see them pass by, and at first insults and sarcasms, rough words and coarse jokes were heard on every side. Gradually a change came over the fickle multitude. The voices of the white-robed nuns arose above the noise of the crowded thoroughfare; the triumphant accents of the *Te Deum* floated through the sultry atmosphere of that July day, and a sensation of awe crept over the spectators. In some hearts perhaps the sound of those sacred hymns awoke echoes of an innocent and distant past. And so the long journey was performed, at first amidst the tumult and confusion of angry passions and rough voices, then in solemn silence, till the Place de Trône was reached at last. The Carmelites descended from the carts and, as simply and naturally as though they were about to commence the Divine Office, knelt down, a snow-white group, at the foot of the scaffold. They sang the *Veni Creator*, and then in a clear, firm voice renewed their baptismal and religious vows. Strange to say, the people, the officials, the soldiers, the executioners themselves, stood by, silent and respectful! Not a word of impatience, not a hostile exclamation was heard; many of the spectators seemed, on the contrary, deeply moved; a few of them wept.

Having completed their preparation, they rose from their knees. The Mother Prioress, faithful to the end to the responsibilities of her office, asked to be executed the last, and her request was granted. The first to die was the young novice, Sister Constance. She fell upon her knees

before the Prioress, who blessed her, then with a light step ascended the blood-stained staircase, singing the *Laudate*, which was taken up by her Sisters at the foot of the guillotine. "She looked," says an eye-witness, "like a queen going to be crowned." After her came Sister Marie Henriette; her lovely countenance had never been so radiant. Like Sister Constance, she sang the *Laudate* until death silenced her voice for ever. Then one by one the others followed; the aged Sister Charlotte, ever forgiving, saying to the executioner: "I forgive you as heartily as I ask God's pardon for myself." At last the sound of singing grew fainter; of the sixteen who, a few minutes ago, had chanted the *Laudate*, only one was left. Mother Teresa of St. Augustine, having placed her charges safe in the hands of God, prepared to follow in her footsteps; in her hand she held a tiny statue of our Lady that the Sisters had, each in turn, kissed before ascending the scaffold; this she gave to a friend who stood near; then calmly and joyfully went to receive the martyr's crown for which she had so fervently prayed.

We read in the accounts of eye-witnesses that the bodies and heads of the victims were thrown into carts painted red and dripping with blood, and taken to a then lonely spot called Picpus, not far from the Place du Trône. It was here that between the 14th of June and the 27th of July, 1794, the bodies of thirteen hundred victims were cast into a large pit, thirty feet square. Since those evil days the relatives of the murdered dead have bought the piece of land, and a convent and a church have been built close by. Against the wall of the little cemetery, one of the most impressive in Paris, a large white marble tablet bears the names of the sixteen Carmelite nuns who are buried here with so many other victims of the Reign of Terror.

Let us return to the prison at Compiègne, and hear what Dame Ann Teresa has to relate, after seeing the holy Carmelites hurried away to death.

The increasing harshness of their jailers confirmed the Benedictines in their conviction that ere long they would share the fate of their French Sisters. They were roughly

ordered to put aside their religious habit, which was "offensive to republican eyes," and, when they objected that they possessed no other clothes, the mayor of the town, named Scellier, brought them the clothes that had been left in the prison by the martyred Carmelites. Dame Partington tells us how, in their humility, she and her Sisters thought themselves unworthy to wear the poor garments that had belonged to those whom they revered as martyrs, but having no other clothes, and being prohibited from wearing their Benedictine habit, they took possession of the Carmelites' garments, and continued to wear them for ten months longer. Although the fall and execution of Robespierre, which took place a few days after the martyrdom of the Carmelites, put an end to the worse excesses of the Reign of Terror, the Benedictines remained in prison all through the long, dreary winter till April 24, 1795. They then made their way to Calais, where they embarked early in May for England. During their long imprisonment they had been prevented from giving news to their families, and among those who hurried to meet them on their return to their own country was the brother of Dame Margaret Burgess, who had died in the Compiègne prison. When informed of her fate, he raised his eyes and hands to heaven: "God be thanked," he said, "for making me the brother of a martyr!"

The simple narrative of Dame Anne Teresa Partington, herself a sufferer for the Faith and an eye-witness of the events which she related, is borne out in every detail and occasionally supplemented by the French testimonies on the subject. Thus our Benedictine narrator gives us no description of the clothes which her community inherited from the Carmelites, but on this point we gather full particulars from an important publication by Monsieur Alexandre Sorel. It is called *Les Carmélites de Compiègne devant le Tribunal Révolutionnaire, 29 Messidor, An II.* (17th of July, 1794). The author tells us that a member of the Comité de Surveillance of Compiègne noticed that the Carmelites had left part of their linen and clothes in the prison, and he observed likewise that in the same prison were a number of "Irish" (*sic*) nuns who were still, as he

expresses it, "embéguinées, guimpées et revêtues d'habits dont la bigarrure ne peut qu' offusquer des regards républicains"—comically muffled, wimpled and clad in a garb the motley medley appearance of which could not but be offensive to republican eyes.

At his suggestion the Comité passed a resolution which put at the disposal of the English nuns: "34 caps, 34 neckerchiefs, 17 bedgowns or jerkins and skirts," adding that "they could not be put to a better or more well-founded use." Monsieur Sorel gives the words of the entry as it stands in the register of acts of the Comité de Surveillance.

This decision explains the act of the mayor Scellier, who, as Dame Partington tells us, made over the Carmelites' garments to the Benedictines. He evidently acted in the matter as the delegate of the Comité. There were sufficient clothes to provide for the whole community; for although they had been twenty-one in number at first, death had thinned their ranks and only seventeen remained. The Carmelites had originally numbered seventeen, but one of them, Sœur Marie de l'Incarnation, being absent on business at the time of the arrest of her Sisters, only sixteen were executed. It is clear from what has been said that each English nun entered into possession of a skirt and jerkin, two caps and two kerchiefs, and what remains of the Stanbrook relics corresponds to this description. The number of the garments has considerably diminished; we are told by Dame Anne Teresa that, on arriving in England, the Benedictines gave away part of these precious relics to different friends and benefactors, and her testimony on this point is confirmed by that of the Lady Abbess, but the form and texture of the garments that remain show that they formed part of the original store of clothes that the mayor of Compiègne made over to the English prisoners. The Stanbrook relics consist (1) of a jerkin or a long jacket, made of coarse linen, with lilac flowers; (2) of a cap of white linen, frilled with cambric; (3) of a sandal, on the sole of which is written in the known handwriting of one of the Cambrai nuns these words: "This sandal formerly belonged to one of the Carmelite nuns of Com-

pièrgne who was guillotined at Paris under Robespierre;" and of a few small remnants of material similar to that of the jacket, but of various colours, red and white.

A question naturally arises, How came the Carmelites to leave their clothes in the Compiègne prison? Upon this point we have the testimony of a contemporary, Sœur Marie de l'Incarnation, who belonged to the Carmelite community. She was, as we have already stated, absent on business at the time of her companions' arrest and, after the Revolution, her chief object in life was to collect evidence regarding those whose crown of martyrdom she so nearly shared. Her notes on the subject were published by Cardinal Villecourt, who had been Vicar-General of Sens and Superior of the Carmel of that town, where Sœur Marie de l'Incarnation died in 1836. She tells us that the Carmelites had repeatedly requested their jailers to give them wherewith to wash their clothes, but until the 10th of July their petition had been roughly rejected. On the morning of that day, however, they were at last permitted to wash their poor garments, but the work was barely started when the mayor burst into their room and informed them that the Comité de Sûreté Générale in Paris required their immediate removal to that city. The Prioress, she adds, anxious and distressed at the idea of her Sisters travelling in their dripping clothes, requested permission to send for other garments from the outside. She also petitioned that the nuns might finish their midday meal; both requests were harshly rejected. The nuns were then hurried into the carts that stood at the prison gates, and were kept for three hours exposed to the insults of the crowd before beginning their weary journey. The impression of the Stanbrook Benedictines, formed from a close study of documents, is that in order to wash all their clothes the Carmelites had ventured to resume, for convenience' sake, some part of their religious garb, perhaps only the white mantle, in which, according to contemporary accounts, they were led to execution, a circumstance sufficiently singular to excite attention. Thus, owing to a seemingly trivial incident, they had the consolation of meeting death clothed in the livery of their Order; but it is probable also that the

sight of the proscribed religious habit may have contributed to draw upon their devoted heads the insults of the population of Compiègne while they sat in the carts at the prison doors, waiting for the signal of departure.

This view is further confirmed by the verbal tradition handed down to the present community of Stanbrook by the Cambrai nuns, who, alluding to the precious relics, always spoke of "having got those clothes out of the wash-tub," a familiar expression of which the meaning is now understood.

These simple and poor garments assumed special value in the eyes of their wearers when they heard of the glorious martyrdom of their former owners. Hence on their arrival in England they generously, as we have stated, bestowed portions of the relics on their friends and benefactors, also, as the sequel proves, on several Carmelite communities. Within the last few years, when the process for the beatification of the Carmelites began, the Stanbrook nuns endeavoured to find out the fate of these valuable relics of the martyred dead. In answer to their inquiries came an interesting communication from the Carmelites of Darlington. In September, 1895, a member of this community unexpectedly came across a parcel containing a piece of fine, white cambric, some other pieces of coarser stuff flowered, some remnants of red and white, and two pieces of sleeves that had evidently belonged to the garment described in the French official report as a *déshabillé*, and in the Stanbrook archives as a jerkin or jacket. Attached to these remnants was an autograph letter addressed to Mother Mary Bernard Houseman, the Prioress of the community in 1794. The writer of the letter was Mary Blyde, the Lady Abbess of the Cambrai nuns, who, after their arrival in England from Compiègne, were established temporarily at Woolton, then at Salford, before settling permanently at Stanbrook. The letter runs as follows:—

"Honoured Madam,—I received your kind favour by Miss Brown, who arrived here very safe. I am glad to find you and your worthy community are so well placed and happy. Thank God we are also the same. I have sent you some

small things that belonged to the Carmelites. I am sorry I have not anything better. Indeed, I have given them almost all away. The clothes we had given us were not those they were executed in, but those they wore before, which they left in the same prison that we were in; and after the people of the town ordered us to put off our habit, they brought us these clothes to put on. They were in a room opposite to us, and we saw them conducted by guards to the door, and set off for Paris. I have had the pleasure of speaking with them twice, though with much fear. I am sorry you have had some of your community in a bad state of health. Excuse haste.

"From your obliged humble servant,

"MARY BLYDE,

"Woolton, July 15th." "Abbess unworthy.

It may be noticed that the Benedictine Abbess lays stress upon the fact that the clothes that came into her possession were those worn by the Carmelites *before* their execution. Even at this early date a certain number of errors seem to have been spread respecting the relics; it was even reported that they were the clothes in which the martyrs had been executed. In reality the white mantles in which they went to the guillotine were most probably buried with them in the common grave of the Picpus cemetery. A venerable priest, Father Carrichon, who was present at several executions, tells us that "each time a head fell, it was thrown with the body *tout habillé*, wearing its clothes, into a cart painted red, and dripping with blood," which conveyed the remains of the victims to the desolate enclosure, where they were thrown into a large pit. This enclosure is now a place of pilgrimage much frequented by the devout clients of the martyred Carmelites.

The discovery of the relics at Darlington almost coincided with the arrival of a letter from the present Carmelites of Compiègne to their English Sisters, informing them that the process of beatification had lately been commenced in Rome; thus the value of the relics was still more clearly proclaimed.

A discovery similar to that made at Darlington was made

by the Carmelites of Lanherne, who, on searching, found among their possessions a few sheets written at a much later date by one of the Benedictine nuns when they were at Abbot's Salford, a few years before their final removal to Stanbrook in 1838. To this paper were attached two pieces of flowered linen, and a few words explaining that these were cut from the clothes that the martyrs had worn in prison. It has so far been impossible to trace the other garments which, with almost excessive generosity, the Cambrai Benedictines distributed among their friends on landing in England. Perchance, after reading these lines, the members of other communities or of old Catholic families, on searching among their heirlooms, may come across remnants similar to those so often described, and which the process of beatification, now begun in Rome, invests with special value.

It is interesting to notice how, owing to the presence at Compiègne of the English Benedictines, the memory of their fellow-prisoners, the martyred Carmelites, was from the outset revered in England, where their history excited at least as much interest and admiration as in their own country.

One of the first to draw attention to the glorious death of these holy servants of God was the great and good Bishop Milner, then priest at Winchester. In 1795 he began to publish in the Laity's Directory a series of articles upon "the sufferings of the English communities under the dominion of the French Republicans," which he continued down to 1800. In the Directory for 1796 his article is devoted to the perils of the Cambrai Benedictines, who had only landed in England the previous year, 1795. Bishop Milner must have interviewed the travellers immediately on their arrival, for his article was in type by November, 1795, six months only after the Benedictines landed at Dover, and was published in a separate article before the issue of the Laity's Directory for 1796. Although correct in the main, the article contains several minor errors which are carefully rectified in the Stanbrook copy by Dame Anne Teresa Partington. The care with which this faithful eye-witness has corrected even the smallest inaccuracies is

a new proof of the implicit faith that can be placed in her own narrative. We may picture to ourselves how eagerly zealous Dr. Milner questioned the newly-arrived Benedictines, and how the travellers, who perchance still wore the *déshabillés* of the martyred Carmelites, related as the most striking feature of their imprisonment their short but memorable acquaintance with St. Teresa's heroic daughters. Thus it happened that only sixteen months after its occurrence their martyrdom was duly recorded in print by an English priest. Dame Anne Teresa's own manuscript was probably written, or at least completed, about the same date, 1796 or 1797. One copy exists at Stanbrook, another at Stonyhurst.

The Carmelites' heroic death is mentioned in several other books published in England about the same period.[1]

In all these notices, Dr. Milner's included, certain inaccuracies occur which, although apparently trivial to a casual reader, might have seriously affected the possibility of valuable evidence in some important historical links needed by the ecclesiastical judges in the cause of beatification had not the Stanbrook archives been available. Nevertheless, these different notices have, in their own way, rendered useful service to the same holy cause, inasmuch as they prove that during the last hundred years the memory of the Carmelite martyrs has been honoured in England, and this by means of their English fellow-prisoners, who became in the designs of Providence the guardians of their memory as well as the happy possessors of their relics.

It has pleased God within the last few years to manifest the glory of the martyred nuns by numerous and striking proofs of the value of their intercession. Many cures of apparently hopeless diseases have rewarded the faith of their clients. We give a few of them as they have been reported to us, without wishing to anticipate the judgement on their character which it will be the duty of the ecclesiastical judges to form after a searching examination and hearing of competent witnesses.

[1] For the names of these books, see *The Month*, November, 1901, pp. 470–71.

Among the happy recipients of these favours, the first was a little French child, the nephew of one of the present Carmelites of Compiègne, who, in 1895, was seized with two equally grave maladies. The physician had formally declared "that there was no possibility of recovery," but his sorrowing mother suddenly bethought herself of recommending her boy to the prayers of the Compiègne community. The nuns sent her a picture and a tiny relic of the martyrs, and joined her in a novena. Before it was ended a total and inexplicable change had taken place in the child's condition, all danger having completely disappeared. The boy has since enjoyed perfect health. The following year, 1896, an almost similar occurrence took place in England. Again a little child was the happy object of the martyrs' protection, and this time the *petit miraculé*, as the French nuns affectionately call him, was connected with the martyrs' fellow-prisoners, the English Benedictines. His great-grand-aunt, Dame Anselma Anne, a holy Religious, much revered and beloved by her Sisters, died in prison at Compiègne during the dreary winter of 1793–94. In April, 1896, more than a century after his venerable relative had breathed her last among the hardships of her French prison, little Crathorne Anne lay at the point of death in the house of one of his aunts in England. The physician had given up all hopes of saving him, when, on April 23rd, his mother received from the Benedictines of Stanbrook a relic and a picture of the martyrs. She immediately began a novena, but the child's condition seemed to get gradually worse, until one day when, while his mother, leaning over his little bed, softly sang the prayers of the novena, he fell asleep, which he had not done for weeks. From that moment the alarming symptoms began to decrease, and before the end of the novena they entirely vanished. The Protestant doctor openly expressed his astonishment at this "most unusual occurrence." "I shall always believe," adds the happy mother, "that the Carmelites of Compiègne cured our little boy, the change having taken place at the very moment when I was praying for him." The same year, 1896, a cure no less remarkable than that of little Crathorne was

obtained in the South of France at a Carmelite convent, where a nun, Sister A. de St. B., was afflicted with a complication of diseases, among which was dropsy. For many months she had not left her bed; two physicians had declared the case to be utterly hopeless when, in May, 1896, the nuns received a circular from the Carmelites of Compiègne informing them that a portion of the martyrs' relics had been received from Stanbrook.

This incident suggested the idea of a novena to the martyrs, which was made by the community and in which the sick nun joined. The first novena brought a slight improvement; the second, a radical, and we venture to add, a miraculous change. On the seventh day the patient was able to sleep, the next day the swelling disappeared; the ninth day, the Sister, who had not left her bed for months, rose, walked down to the chapel without assistance and received Holy Communion with the community. Since then she has enjoyed good health. The doctor's opinion was distinctly expressed: "Humanly speaking," he said, "the invalid's recovery was hopeless; we were powerless to cure her."

Scarcely less wonderful was the recovery of a Carmelite nun, Sister Martha of St. Joseph; she was afflicted with abscesses in the leg that caused her unutterable discomfort and pain; these healed suddenly and completely in December, 1897, during a third novena to the martyred Carmelites. In May, 1899, a Franciscan nun at Montmorillon was cured of cancer in the stomach at the close of a novena to the same holy servants of God.

It would be too long to enumerate the spiritual and temporal favours, of which detailed accounts, with due mention of names and dates, are lying before us as we write these lines. From New Orleans and Hanoï, from England and from Spain, from different parts of France, pour in letters that record the marvellous answers to prayer that have been received by the martyrs' clients. Souls won back to the true Faith, anxious hearts comforted and made calm, temporal perils dispelled, as well as hopeless invalids restored to health, such are the tangible proofs of the Carmelites' power with God. All these favours are carefully

noted by Mgr. de Teil, the zealous postulator of the cause, and they evidently pave the way to the future canonization of our dear martyrs.[1]

In 1867 the daughters of St. Teresa returned to Compiègne, not indeed to their former monastery, but to another house, of which they took possession on the 18th of January, 1867. The ceremony was presided over by M. Le Rebours, Superior of the Paris Carmelites. In his discourse he reminded his hearers that a special tie bound him to the Religious, whom he regarded as the daughters and representatives of the martyrs of 1794; his grandfather had, like the Carmelites, been executed at the Barrière du Trône, and was buried in the same grave as the sixteen Religious.

Their convent is a new building, standing on high ground, close to the magnificent forest, once the favourite hunting-ground of the Imperial Court. When, on a bright April day, we visited Compiègne, the little town lay silent and sleepy in the sunshine. We passed up the principal street, where certain old houses, with pointed gables, may have witnessed the departure of the sixteen Religious who, on the 12th of July, 1794, left Compiègne for Paris. Apart, almost within the forest, stands the convent, where the Mother Prioress kindly showed us her treasures. First, the tiny wooden statue of our Lady, which each nun pressed to her lips before ascending the scaffold, and we reverently knelt before the little image, the silent confidant and consoler of those heroic souls in their hour of agony. Then we were shown the relics which in 1895 were sent to Compiègne by Lady Gertrude d'Aurillac Dubois, the Abbess of Stanbrook, who generously gave part of a linen garment, white with lilac flowers, as also half a

[1] The Vice-Postulator begs that information of favours obtained may be at once sent to him, either in English or French, at his address, Mgr. de Teil 41, Rue d'Alsace, Paris; or to The Rev. Mother Prioress, au Carmel de Compiègne, Oise, France.

Small engravings representing these sixteen servants of God at the foot of the guillotine, with a short historical notice of their glorious death printed on the reverse of the picture, are on sale at Stanbrook Abbey, Worcester. By the application of these pictures most of the cures operated in France and England are effected.

sandal, precious relics possessed by her community since 1794. These valuable relics of their dead Sisters were brought to the Compiègne Religious on May 2, 1895, and the Cambrai Benedictines, wearing these same garments, had crossed over to England on the 2nd of May, 1795.

The renewal, after the relapse of a century, of sisterly greetings between the communities of Stanbrook and Compiègne was a source of deep interest to the Lady Abbess of Stanbrook, whose holy life was even then drawing to a close.[1] According to those who knew her best, in her seemed to revive the great gifts and graces that in past days had distinguished Lady Catherine Gascoigne, Abbess of Cambrai, and the brave and patient sufferers of the Compiègne prison. It was perhaps a kindred spirit of self-sacrifice that drew her so strongly towards the martyred Carmelites, that made her so eager to promote their glory, to honour their memory, and to serve their cause.

While behind their curtain the good Carmelites enlarged with affectionate gratitude on the kindness of the English nuns, we thought of the loving and mysterious dealings of God's Providence. In past days of peril and sorrow He brought together for purposes of His own the English Benedictines and the French Carmelites, and now, owing to that meeting, the present representatives of the Cambrai community have become the chief witnesses in the process of canonization of the French martyrs. If, as seems probable, the sixteen Carmelites are raised to the altars of the Church, the glad *Te Deum* that will rise from the Compiègne Convent will be echoed with scarcely less fervour across the sea on English soil, in the quiet cloisters of Stanbrook.

[1] She died October 19, 1897.

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